AN

# OFFER MADE TO A GENTLEMAN OF QVALITIE

by M. Iohn Fraſer, to ſubſcribe and embrace the Miniſters of Scotlands religion, if they can ſufficientlie proue, that they haue the true kirk and lawful calling.

*WHERETO ARE ADIOYNED CERtaine reaſons and conſiderations concerning their two heades and foundations, vvithout the light of vvhich others can not be cleared, nor aſſured ground in religion in theſe dayes eſtabliſhed.*

*Nevvlie corrected and ſet forth, vvith the aduiſe of the author.*

Ad ipſam ſalutem ac vitam æternam nemo peruenit, niſi qui habet caput Chriſtum. Habere autem caput Chriſtum nemo poterit, niſi qui in eius corpore fuerit, quod eſt Eccleſia.

*D. Auguſtinus.*

Permiſſu Superiorum.

M. D C. V.

Munus beatæ vitæ non nisi intra Ecclesiam reperitur, quæ super petram etiam fundata est, quæ ligandi & soluendi claues accepit. Hæc est vna quæ tenet & possidet omnem sui sponsi & Domini potestatem, perquam coniugalem potestatem etiam de ancillulis filios parere potest: qui si non superbiant, in sortem hæreditatis vocabuntur: si autem superbiant, extrà remanebunt.

*D. Augustinus. Tract. 27. in Ioan.*

Quisquis ille est, & qualiscunque ille est, Christianus non est, qui in Christi Ecclesia non est. *Idem.*

# TO THE MINISTERS OF SCOTLAND, HIS DEARE CONTRY MEN,

IOHN FRASER wisheth the Knowledge of the verity and eternal lyf in IESVS CHRIST our Lord.

AS my offer is reasonable, so hope I that ye vvil accept the same, and cleare your selues vvith reason, both for your ovvne cause, and for the contentment of sic as are in doubt, if ye haue the true Church and lauful calling, or else beleue assuredlie that ye haue nather of them. I am in deed but à particulare and single man, vvho maketh the offer, yet assure your selfs that there is no Catholique aliue being

of discretion & knowledge, but will say and promise, yea must accomplish the same, as being obliged to acknowledge the true Church vnder no lesse paine then eternal condemnation. Wherfore I pray you to answer with a commune accord, or, if anie particular man amonge you ether taketh the burden on him self, or receueth that charge of you: to approue his labours by your publique consent. Morouer because sundry in place of good and solide reasons, giue iniurious words, reason wold ye absteine therefro, examining my argumentes & answering thereto solidelie, and to weygh well my proofes and mynd, rather then to pik at words. For so I think to do, if anie answer be made to me, willing nether to giue nor receaue fals or light money, for good paiment, meikle lesse the drosse & scumme

of iniu-

*of iniurious talke for good gold of ſufficient proofs. The queſtion is of a moſt precious iewel, let vs touch it with an innocent and cleane hand, mouth, and hart. He ſhalbe victorious, who hath or findeth the trueth, which can not be had except in the true Church amongſt the lauful paſtors, to whome we owe duetiful obedience: which moueth me at this tyme to ſubmit all that I haue writtin here, or shal writ herafter in matters of religion, to the iudgement of the Catholique Apoſtoque and Romaine Church and paſtours of the ſame: (as in matters of eſtait, to his M. his honorable counſel, & other whatſoeuer his magiſtrats or officers, if I haue ſpoken in any thing vnreuerently: for my intention is vpright to both) becauſe at this preſent I am aſſuredlie perſuaded that shee is only the true Church guyded by lauful paſtors.*

When ye proue me that this honour appertaineth onlie to your companie, and sic other as agreeth vvith you in vnitie of doctrine, I shal behaue my self vvith lyke submission and reuerence towards you in al respectes. I haue told you my opinion & ioyned reasons therto, vvherby ye may see me reddie to receaue yours & to knovv therby vvhat assurãce ye haue of your Church and calling vvithouth the vvhich assurãce nether can vve enter in vvith you, nor they vvho ar alreddie vvith you remaine vvith safe conscience: for vvho can be in quyetnes of mynd, not being assured if he be in Gods house, out of the vvhich there is no saluatiõ? I protest before him, to vvhom no thing is hid that my offer procedeth of a sincere mynd towardes his honour vvith earnest desyr of your vveal, & al Christians & principallie of my contrymen; & nether of con-

contempt of you, nor preſumption of my ovvne ſtrength. As to anie of your perſonnes, the euil arriue to me, that I vvold vvish to you. I am affectionat to the religion that I profeſſe, true it is (vvhich as I beleeue, can not iuſtlie offend you, ſeing that if ye make me yours, ye may haue me as forvvard for you) yet I haue vſed as litlil offenſiue language as I could. But if any thing hath eſcapped out of my penne, that may be interpreted other vvayes then I vvold vvish, I pray you pardon me; and think that eſtentymes the bitternes commeth rather of the matter it ſelf then of myne ovvne nature. If anie be ſo hard and difficil that he vvil not accept my excuſe, nor pardon that vvhich in his opinion is offenciue: the beſt vvay to reuenge him ſelf on me, is to be more modeſt then he thinketh me to haue bene: for he vvil beare avvay

*by that meanes the honour of Christian modestie, vvhich J vvold gladlie haue. The armes of chyding ar vnpropre in this field, vvherin those of solide reason may onlie obteine the victorie. Jf ye proue your Church to be good & your calling lauful, J vvil esteme vvorse of al other cõpanies diuided frome you in doctrine, then ye can saie, vvrite, or thinke. God of his infinit mercie by vertue of his truth ioyne vs altogether here by vertu of his Church militant, that vve may be partakers of eternal blisse in his Church triumphant, to the vvhich bringe vs the father, sonne & holie spirit.* AMEN.

1. To Timothe. 3.

Theis thing I vvrite to thee, hoping that I shal come to thee shortlie. But if I tary long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to conuerse in the house of God, which is the Kirk of the liuing God, the piller and ground of truth.

# AN OFFER MADE TO A GENTILMAN OF QVALITIE BY M. IOHN Fraser Priour of S. Nicolas, to subscribe & embrace the Ministers of Scotlands religion, if they can sufficiently proove that they haue the true kirk, and lawful calling.

*VNTO AR ADIOYNED CERtain reasons and consideration concerning these two heades and foundations, vvithout the light of vvhich, others can not be cleared, nor assured ground in religion in these dayes established.*

BEEING now in the fielde (where solitude giueth me leasure) & wel myndful of the offer and promise I made you at visiting, I thought it not out of purpose to affirme now by writinge, what I spake then by word vnto you.

*If the ministers may shew by good and solide reasons, that they haue the true kirk, and are lawful pastours thereof, I shal vvithout any further inquisition, examination, or tryal of their doctrine, subscribe to their confession of faith, obey to their commands and vvil, yea accept their charge.*

Which promise and offer I make for no vaine

vaine ostentation of my selfe nor to provoke any man by sic braging, but that an necessarie dutie obligeth me to follow this course, whereof my grounds are these. No man can be saued except by IESVS CHRIST: and no man can be saued by him, except he be a membre of his mystical bodie, which is his kirk, where vnto can be no entrie but by the doore (if we would not be esteemed as theeues and robbers) that doore can not be opened but by them who haue the keyes, that is, by the lawful pastours. Our Lord hath obtayned al power in heauen and in earth: he hath sent his Apostles with like power and charge: and that they should exercise this power truelie, & in al holynes, perpetual assistence of the holy spirit in al veritie was promised and giuen vnto them: and in them and by them to their successours in the kirk vnto the consummation of the world. So I am forced to haue recourse to the Kirk our Sauiours spouse: which I find in vaine and to no effect, if I be not receaued by the true officers in that holy tabernacle and house of God. Now in this great nombre of pretended kirks (for there be more then an hondreth of diuerse companies who haue vsurped that honorable and soueraigne name where as there can be but one true, except we would gif many bodyes to one head, which sort of monster hath hitherto surpassed al poëtical fiction) we should vse al care & diligence to find out the true kirk

Act. 4. 11.

Ioa. 10. 1.

Matth. 28 18.

Matth. 28 20.

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gouerned by lawful paſtours: for whoſoeuer goeth wrong in this mater, entring into the synagog of Satan in ſteede of Gods kirk, he ſtrayeth from eternal ſaluation, howſoeuer he perſuade him ſelfe to be in the true way.

I think the reward or danger might make anie man careful in ſeeking; and circumſpect in election and chooſing, not giuing rashlie credite to euery man, who shal promiſe or vndertake to lead him to Gods houſe. We ar aduertiſed by our bleſſed Sauiour to be ware, and not to beleeue them, who shal ſay *lo here is Chriſt, lo there.* We are fallen in a dangerouſe tyme, where the diuerſitie and multitude of opinions and ſectes putteth many men in doubt whome to ſtee, whome to follow. Only this is confeſſed and granted by al men, that there is a kirk, and but one only (I meane Catholique and vniuerſal) eſpouſe and myſtical body of IESVS CHRIST, houſe of God, piller of veritie, mother of all faithful, out of the which there is no ſaluation, nor lyfe. For no man can haue our Lord for head, who is not a member of his body. And ſeing no man gaine ſayeth this, of neceſſitie it muſt but true, as a thing printed in al mens harts by God him ſelfe, who wil no man to haue excuſe where he willeth no man to refuſe.

*Matt.* 24. 23. *Mar.* 13. 21. *Luc.* 21. 8.

And for that cauſe in the ſymbole of faith immediatly after the articles perteining to the holy Trinitie and myſterie of our Redemption, is adioyned: I beleeue the holy Catho-

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lique kirk, or as it is in the ſymbole of Nice; I beleeue, one, holy, Catholique, and Apoſtolique Kirk. we muſt acknowlege hir for our mother; for by hir meanes the lawful ſonne muſt knowe his genealogie, birth, & kindred in this ſpiritual familie. By hir the child knew God his father: IESVS CHRIST apperteineth to hir only: and no man can claime right but by hir only, in whoſe fauour the contract of mariage was made: he muſt be auouched by hir who wold iuſtly pretend any part in Chriſts eternal inheritance. S. Cyprian. ſayeth very well. *Illum (Eccleſia) patrem noſtrum Illum laſte nutrimur, ſpiritu eius animamur: adulterari non poteſt ſponſa Chriſti, incorrupta eſt & pudica, vnam domum nouit, vnius cubiculi ſanctitatem caſto pudore cuſtodit: hac nos Deo ſeruat: hac filios regno, quos generauit, aſſignat. Quiſquis ab Eccleſia ſegregatus adulterae iungitur: à promiſſis Eccleſiæ ſeparatur. Nec perueniet ad Chriſti præmia, qui relinquit Eccleſiam Chriſti, alienus eſt, profanus eſt, hoſtis eſt: habere iã non poteſt Deum patrem, qui Eccleſiã non habet matrem. Si potuit euadere quiſquam, qui extra Arcam Noe fuit, & qui extra Eccleſiam foris fuerit, euadet. &c.* VVe ar borne of hir birth and generation: VVe ar nourished vvith hir milke: VVe ar quickned and take lyfe by hir ſpirite. The ſpouſe of Chriſt cannot be defiled vvith adulterie: ſhee is vncorrupt and chaſt: ſhee knowveth but one houſe: ſhee keepeth vvith a chaſt shamefastnes the holynes of one bedchamber: ſhee doth keepe vnto God. Shee doth appoint to the kingdome the ſonne, vvhich ſhee hath begotten. VVhoſoeuer being

*De vnitate Eccle. cap. 3.*

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*separated from the kirk ioyneth him selfe to the adulteresse, he is separated from the promisses of the Kirk: neither shal he come to the rewards of Christ, who leaueth Christs kirk: he is a mere stranger, a prophane man, an enimie: he can not neyr haue God to his father who hath not the kirk to his mother: If any man could escape who was without the Ark of Noe he also shal escape who shalbe without the Kirk* Sic lyk S. Augustin sayeth: *si quis absque Ecclesia inuentus fuerit, alienus erit à numero filiorum* if any man *shalbe* found *without the kirk, he shalbe as a stranger and not accounted in the number of the lawful sonnes.* Lib. 4. c. 10 de symbolo To. 9.

Out of Adams syde sleepping in Paradise was formed Eua, of whose mariage came al mankynd; out of Christs syde sleepping on the crosse was formed the kirk, the only lawful mother of al the faithful.

Knowing once this kirk I wil make no difficultie to enter therein, to follow and obey hir voice; because I am sure shee can not erre, fail, nor be deceaued, nor deceaue anie man: And this I beleeue without any doubt, I say beleeue, for many good and weaghty reasons. yea and it must be so: for others wayes how shal shee preserue & keepe me from errour & heresie, not being hir self exempt & free there fro, vnles perchance ye wold haue me more skilful nor my guyd, in which case it were more seemly that I should guyd hir, nor shee me: for certainely a doutbful leader can not make an assured companie. If the wisdome and authoritie of the Kirk be not sufficient to help

to help our infirmitie & ignorãce in maters of faith, wher shal we haue a sure guyd knowẽ to the wordle, to whome men of euery estate and condition may haue recourse in their doubtes and controuersies *qui dubitat in fide, infidelis est*: Who doubtes in faith is an infidelle; at least if he remaine stil in doubt.

I doubt not but some wil send me to the scriptures with certaine rules; the which may resolue al questions and cleare al sort of controuersies arrysing in matters of religion. I wil accept their counsel, and serue me with their inuention, prouyding I can see good reason. I wil say only at this time, that they who vaunte them selues to haue inuented and kept (according to their iudgment) these rules, cannot agree amonges them selues (as I shalbe habil to proue, God willing, if anie man cal my saying in doubt) so that I can not hope to accord with anie of them, except, without anie farther rule, I say as he sayes, wherein I must disagree with many, seing he agrees with so few. But to the matter. I know there is no errour teached, nor can be teached in the scriptures: they were dytted by the holy spirite to holy men, who, as good & true instruments of the veritie, did write as it was dytted to them by God. So I worshipe the scriptures for their authors cause, I embrace them for the veritie conteined in them: yet by reason of the high mysteries hid therin, I dare not be so bold as to decyd

2. Pet. 1. 20.

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al questions thereby, knowing assuredly that no prophecie of the scripture is of priuat interpretation, but must be interpreted by the same holie spirit by which it was written, that is by holie men, remaining within the bosome of the kirk, and authorised by hir, as they were who receaued it from God: that is, the true interpretation must be taken of the kirk, to whome God hath committed al veritie for our instruction. For if we shal with some men make doubt of the kirks authoritie and firmitie in al veritie, as not being euery where certaine, thinking and plainly affirming, or rather as a ground of religion, surelie beleeuing, that shee may erre and fail: to whome shal we haue refuge? what remedie shal we haue for the woundes of a doubtful conscience? who shal without iuste reproche apply thes rules to the scriptures and giue vs the true senses? Who shal pronunce the sentence, and decree, where to al parties must stand; there must be one, *ne circumferamur omni* Eph. 4. 14.
*vento doctrinæ: That we be not carried about With euery Winde of doctrine.* There wilbe an euil ordered houle if euerie man be left to his owne fantasie. We are not put here nather to pleade nor play, but with the honour of God to seek our owen saluation in humilitie, veritie, and charitie. I must haue better and more sure guyd nor my self, before I leaue the kirk: he must be better nor shee also, or else I shal change in vaine. If ther be anie such like I

wold gladly heare his name, his qualitie, wher he dwelleth, how I might know him. I wold willinglie take the paine, and bestow the expenses to seek him out The loue and desyre of veritie with hope of a most ample reward wil make the labour light.

But ye wil say, it is the scriptures. But it is not the scriptures I seek, for I haue found them. I seek that which I could not find, wher I found the scriptures, to wit the true sense of the scriptures; for other wayes anie librarie might haue satisfied my iust curiositie: for what curiositie can be more iust, nor to seek eternall lyfe? The heretiks and schismatiks, yea some Iewes and Turks haue the Bible, and allegeth them selues to haue the true sense of the same: but how far they be from it their most pernicious incredulitie doth declare. But it may be said, that they take not the scriptures, as they should be taken. I doubt not but they fail, because they goe wrong not hauing assistance & help of the holie spirit: that is as meikel as who wold say, as long yee goe right ye goe not wronge that is true: but how shal I goe right? that is my question: I desire a guyd (for he who is vnlearned and ignorant of the tounges can not serue him self with thes rules, which learned men cannot at al practise) who not onlie knoweth the true way and continueth the same, but also wil shew me it, and in case I vnderstand him not at the first or second time, wil tel me it ouer

againe in more plaine language: and if I yet miſtake him, wil ſhew me my fault and teach me the true meaning: And ſuch like, if my nighbour & I, be in contrarie opinion, wil ſhew vs in plain termes whoſe meaning is good, and whoſe meaning is not good: or if there be any other ſenſe better nor them both, will produce it for our good inſtruction.

The ſcriptures doe tell me the trueth, I doubt not, but they ſuffer me to take a wrong ſenſe, and aduertiſe me not that I am deceaued: as we may ſee to our great ſorrowe now by experience of ſo manie diuerſe ſectes bred of ſiniſtrouſe interpretation taken out of the ſcriptures. Think not that al theſe men do willinglie deceaue them ſelfs: *decipimur ſpecie recti. We ar deceaued by the out ward ſhew of the right.* If they wold haue heard & obeyed the voice of the kirk (who cried high & lowd that they vnderſtode not the true meaning of the ſcriptures) they had not gone wrong, as they haue done now, following their owne iudgement. Ye wil ſay perchance they lacked the holie ſpirit, for whoſoeuer hath his aſſiſtance muſt goe well. I grant you that (& concludo thereon, that the kirk muſt goe wel) but ſeing that euerie man hath not the holie ſpirit; how shal I know who hath him, and who not? Amongſt this infinit nombre of them, who pretendeth to haue that priuiledge (notwithſtanding of their contrarietie, a manifeſt mark of their vntruth, and that *Satan oftenty-*

2. Coryn. 11. 14. *de subsidio Eucharist. To. 2.* *mes doth transfigure and change him self in an Angel of light*) it shal be verie hard to anie man to know whither his spirit be *albus an ater*, *Black or whyte*, as sayeth Zuinglius of his spirit. Moreouer this can be but a spirit particular, and à spirit of discorde, except he agree with the general: for in matters of religion *priuata veritas opinio est, non veritas. A priuat veritie is but an opinion, and not a veritie.* It can not be proper to one only which was giuen for al. I seek a common guyde of al Christians. I wil not credit my owen priuat spirit, an other should not look for anie farther at my hand. The veritie is but one, the guyd & iudge must be of that same nature. If I find out the true guyd and rule, al men, who wold be safe must follow that guyd and rule. So if myne, or anie other particular mans spirit be that sure and true guyde, whosoeuer goeth there to, must goe wrong: yea all other rules without him serueth for nought. Where as the holie spirit can do wel although he haue no rule prescribed to him: he who made the Asse of Balaam to speak, may cause any man he pleaseth to tel the veritie, he nedeth no help of rules: his onlie assistance was sufficient for the Apostles to speake, and vnderstand all tounges and know all veritie for mans saluation. If anie particular personne hath gotten the spirit in this sort, let him speak boldlie, we must be all his disciples. There ar sundrie who wold willingly take vpon them that name as their

their ſtraite ſtyle in writting may euidentlie declare, yet for feare of mockerie they dare not ſay it: But let vs retourne to the ſcriptures examined & interpreted by theſe rules.

The ſcriptures (ſay they) be as the touchestone, wherwith the gold and ſiluer of Chriſtian religion be tryed and knowne, from the falſe and conterfaict gold and baſe money of erronious and hereticall doctrine. Now at euery ſuch tryal ther ſhould be three thinges, the touchſtone, the gold or metall to be tried, & the goldſmith: we haue the touchſtone, to wit the ſcriptures, the gold to be tried, at the heads of religion called in doubt, to know if they be of good and fyne metal of veritie or not. The debate is for the glodſmith, who ſhould trye the gold. This apperteineth not to euerie man, ſeing that euerie man hath not learned the craft. Vntil we find a better, I think it beſt we receaue the kirk, or rather ſuffer the kirk to ſtand with that charge, ſeing no other preſenting him ſelf is worthie of that place, as in deed it apperteineth to no other but to the kirk. Yet ſeing that many doe otherwayes at this time, we may iuſtlie ſay with Sainct Hierom *ſola ſcripturarum arx eſt, quam ſibi paſſim omnes vendicant; hanc garrula anus, hanc delirus ſenex, hanc ſophiſta verboſus, hanc vniuerſi præſumunt, lacerant, docent antequam diſcant* There is only the rafe of the ſcriptures, that all men challenge and vendicate to them ſelfs euerie where, euerie old babbling wyf, euerie raueng old fellowe, euerie *Epiſtola ad Pauliunum.*

*ſophiſt ful of words, yea euerie one in general doe take this ſcripture, diſmember, and teach it, before that they haue learned it.* We ar not now in queſtion of the ſcriptures, but of the interpretation of them, which ſhould not be drawen to our iudgement, but our iudgment drawen to them, *Bringing in captiuitie all vnderſtanding vnto the obedience of Chriſt and hauing in readines to reuenge all diſobedience, when our obedience ſhalbe fulfilled.* IESVS CHRISTS houſe is the ſchoolle of faith, and not of ſcience: he knoweth ſufficientlie, who beleeueth as he ſhould doe. God hath at all time ſerued him ſelf with the kirk to teach men, to declare & ſhewe his will publishing his veritie to the world. He wilbe credited on his onlie word *quoniam ipſe dixit & facta ſunt, ipſe mandauit & creata ſunt.* His ſaying is more ſure, then anie mathematical demonſtration, he may make an inſtrument of anie thing, who made all thinges without anie inſtrument. So our maiſter and Lord made clay with his ſpittle to heal the blind man: in the hand of anie other that had bene ſufficient to make a ſeeing man blind. May he not thē with the clay of mortall men heall our blindnes in the truth? The riuer of Iordan had only common water without anie extraordinarie vertue, yet Naaman being ſent there, by the prophet, it receaueth the power to heal him of his leproſie. The prophete of all prophetes, or rather the maker of all prophets hath ſent vs to the kirk: why ſhall

2.Cor.10. 5.

Ioh. 9. 6.

4 Reg. 5.

shee not haue the vertue to heall vs of our leprosie of ignorance by him, who sent vs to him? S. Peter said in his name to the crippel man *surge & ambula. Ryse and walke.* the naturall sicknes from the birth could not resist his command: his shaddow healed infirmities: his worde slayed: his prayers raised vp the dead: And shall Christs owē worde haue no strēgth? there is vertue in all aboundance, wher euer he will: our weacknes can not stoppe him. I must say with Orosius: *Hoc si quisquam hominum ita dicendum putet, vt sub infirmitate hominis Deum non posse affirmet, & omnipotentiæ Dei aliquid impossibile suspicetur in omni creatura Cœlestium, terrestrium, & infernorum: hunc non tantùm sententia mea dixerim blasphemum, anathema detestandum, sed etiam vel in exemplum Nadab & Abiu Diuino igne damnandum, vel iuxta perditionem Dathan & Abiron hiatu terræ receptum viuum ad inferna mergendum. If anie man thinketh that it may so be said, that by reason of mans infirmitie and weaknes he will say God cannot, and thinketh any thing impossible to the omnipotencie and almightie power of God in all creatures of heauen, of earth, and of hell. I wold esteem according to my iudgment this man not only blasphemouse, & detestable but also either to the exemple of Nadab & Abiu worthie to be condemned by the fire comming from God, or according to the perdition and destruction of Dathan & Abiron being receaued by the opening of the earth, worthie to be quicke thrust doune to hell.* Shal our Maister and Lord

Act. 3. 6.
Act. 5. 15.
ib. 8. 8. 9. 4.
Aduer. Pelagium de arbit. liber.
Leu 10. 2.
Deut 11. 6.

haue no strēgth except that which he receaues from the instruments he imployeth? shal the weaknes of the instrument hold back his will?

Idem. *Quàm potens in faciendo de nihilo, tam facilis in perficiendo de facto. He is as facile and easie in perfecting anie thing made, as he is mightie in making any thing of nought.* There can be no weak instrument in so mightie a hand. *Potest ergo omnia* (sayeth the same Orosius) *in homine qui vtique potest omnia. He may then do all things in man, who may do all things.* I wil therefor follow the kirk with ful confidence: I shal haue a good guyd, seing God hath commanded me so to doo. It wil be hard to persuade me that the contrarie should be donne, except they may shew that ether they ar more wise then God, in taking an other guyd, or that he hath giuen vs that command to deceaue vs; wherof neither can be true. He is a God of wisdome and truth, he hath promised to gouerne his kirk in all truth. If shee erre the shame redoundeth to hir head & spouse IESVS CHRIST, who is hir guyd, redeemer, groundston, & mason, who promist to build hir vpon a rock, and that the gates of hel should not preuail against hir. What reproche should it be to his wisdome or power, if he could not, or wold not keep hir from errour, according to his promise? But he knew not perchance, when he made this promise, what power he had: these new Lords had not as yet limited the marches of his might: their breif of perambulation

was

was not put as yet in executiõ, or shal we say: *Immensa est simémque potentia cœli non habet, quicquid superi voluere peractum est: Promisit quia voluit, seruauit quia potuit. He promised, because he wold, he keeped it, because he might.* And in trueth if this sure ancre of the kirk were loft, how shal we be assured of the veritie? wher shall we seek it bat their hands perchance, who assures vs that the wholl Catholique kirk may erre, because they ar but men. If they be Gods, or may shew vs any special priuiledge, wherby they ar exempted from the generall rule of errour, to the which al men without exception (according to their iudgment, notwithstanding Gods promise) ar subiect, it is reason we should hear them, obey, and follow them, because of their special prerogatiue aboue all others. But whosoeuer sayeth that al men ar subiect to errour and fals opinions, looseth his credit in all other things, hauing obteined credit in that: yea being a man as others, why may he not be deceaued in that, as wel as in the rest? And doubtles he is deceaued, if he think his maxime of errour to haue place in the kirk of God, wher he is ruler and gouernour him self. Who can keep anie thing wel, if it be so vnsure which he hath taken into his owen keeping? Farther the certaine and infallible constancie of the kirk in matters of faith may best be seene in the grounds & meanes shee vseth in teaching and guyding vs. It is most certaine that the work dependeth on

the worker, the effect on the cauſe, and the end, on the cheife beginning. Where the authour, worker, cauſe, fondament, & original beginning ar neceſſarie altogither and vnchangable, the work, effect, and end muſt be of the ſame nature and condition: Now ſeing the kirk hath for hir internal author, mouer, cauſe, and beginning, the Father, the Sonne, and Holie Ghoſt ſpirite of veritie and truth, who hath aſſiſted, aſſiſteth, and will aſſiſt hir to the end of the world, why ſhal not hir doctrine, and ſhee hir ſelf be without errour or fault becauſe of hir good guyd? For faith which ſurpaſſeth al naturall and humain reaſon can haue no ſure ground but by the reuelation of God in his kirk. This aſſurance may be eaſelie ſeen in the ſcriptures, becauſe wher it is ſpoken of the miſſion and power which our Lord geueth to the officers and magiſtrates of his houſe; there alſo is made mention of the promiſes of his perpetuall aſſiſtance and preſence to his kirk. *All power is giuen to me in heauen and in earth: going therefor, teach, ye all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Sonne & of the Holie Ghoſt, teaching thē to obſerue all things whatſoeuer I haue commanded you: and behold I am with you alwayes euen to the conſummation of the world:* As *my father hath ſent me, ſo I ſend you &c. And I will ask the father and he will giue you an other paraclete, that he may abyd with you for euer.* Item. *but the paraclete the holie ſpirite, whom the Father will ſend in*

Matt. 28. 18.

Ie. 20. 21. Ion. 14. 16.

*my name,*

*my name, he wil teach you al things, Whatsoeuer I say vnto you.* And in an other place he prayeth for his kirk. *For them do I pray &c. Sanctifie them in trueth &c. as thou did send me in the vvorld, I haue also sent them in the vvorld.* The whole place is to be readd for it maketh to the purpose. Now if nether his promises doeth oblige him, nor his prayer hath anie place for the stabilitie of the veritie in his kirk, how can it be true that S. Paul sayeth. *And he gaue some Apostles and some prophetes, and other some Euangelists, and other some pastours, and doctours to the consummation of the saintes vnto the vvork of the ministerie, vnto the edification of the bodie of Christ vntill vve meet all into the vnitie of faith.* Whet it is plainlie said that our Lord hath established Ecclesiastical personnes for the perfection of his elect in cõseruing thẽ from the maliciouse craft of satã, that they be not deceaued by errour, not caried away with euerie wind of doctrine; which cannot be eschewed, vnlesse the doctrine of the kirk be without errour. We see the people of euerie country do embrace the religion of their true or fals pastours: so except the pastours haue some certaine rule & guyd more then humaine, without doubt their inconstant doctrine shal make à flock inconstant. *Ye ar the salt of the earth, ye ar the light of the vvorld &c. Ye haue not chosen me, but I haue chosen you, and appointed you that ye go and bring forth fruict and that your fruict, remaine:* Which things were said to the Apostles as representen-

Ioa.16.13. 4.26. Eph.4.11. Matt.5. 13. Io. 15.16.

preſeding the kirk, becauſe they were the firſt fondaments therof, laide by IESVS CHRIST him ſelf being yet on earth.

Gen.1.28. The words of God haue yet their force: *creſcite & multiplicamini, bring forth fruit and multiplie* the words appertaineth to the poſteritie, and yet doe keep their ſtrength, which they receaued in the begining. If ſo be in the temporall and corporal propagation, what ſhal it be in the ſpirituall? or ſhal his liberalitie be leſſe towards his kirk? ſhal shee be *vnius ævi, of one*

lib.1. dec. 1. *age* as ſayeth Liuius of Rome new begonne? Shal we think that ſo great priuiledge & ſo deere boughte appartaineth onlie to the Apoſtles? there is no apparance of reaſon, ſeing the promiſes conteine à perpetual & continual

Ioh.15.16. aſſiſtance: *I haue appointed you, that ye goe, and bring forth fruit, & that your fruit remaine. that whatſoeuer ye aske of my father in my name he may giue it you.* Who can doubt but they haue deſired that according to his owen ſaying, the fruit brought out by them ſhould remaine in the kirk: that is, that the veritie ſhould remaine for euer in the kirk? Should not the ſpirit of conſolation & veritie eternallie abyde in the kirk, wher as none of the Apoſtles did

t liue an hondreth years? When they paſt vp to heauen by their glorioufe martyrdome as our

1.Pet. eldeſt brethren to enter in to the land of eternal lyfe, which our Lord had bought to them with his pretioufe blood, they drew not vp the ladder after thē. The aſſiſtāce in al veritie was

giuen

giuen to thē, as being neceſſarie for mens ſalua-tion: the neceſſitie remaineth, why ſhal not the gift remaine? It was not giuen to the kirk for the Apoſtles take, as appertaining to them onlie, but to the Apoſtles for the kirks ſake they being hir principal membres: ſo the principall motiue remaining, why ſhal not the priuiledge ſo neceſſarie remaine? They receaued it but as membres neareſt to the head, to be continued and conuayed by them to the reſt of the body, *Sicut vnguentum in capite, quod deſcendit in barbam, barbam Aaron, quod deſcendit in oram veſtimenti eius*. This ſweet oyle of veritie which is in the head IESVS-CHRIST, why ſhal it not deſcend vnto the beard of Aaron & to the border of his garment, that is to the Apoſtles & their ſucceſſours, to the extreme border of Chriſts kirk ſignified by his garment? And reaſon wold, or rather Gods infinit mercie, that the ſucceſſours of the Apoſtles ſhould haue that ſame aſſiſtance of the holy ſpirit, becauſe they haue the ſame place and charge for the perfitting of Chriſts body, which is his kirk. And therefor they ar called his officers & ſeruants. And doutbles it were againſt all good reaſon to think, that the holie ſpirit had gotten onlie charge to guyde the Apoſtles, as though our Sauiour had ſufferred death for them onlie, & not for the kirk in all ages. About the yeare of our Lord 1525. (ſundry ſectes being riſen vp vnder the colour, that the true kirk had failled, all the paſtou- *Pſal. 133.*

res hauing erred, & at laſt hauing decayed, and therefor alledging that they were ſent by God to teach the verity ſo many yeares vnknowen to the world) Dauid Georgius a cheif of the Anabaptiſts taking occaſion of that alledged & imaginarie falle of the Catholik kirk, gaue him ſelf out for the true Meſſias: Amongeſt the reaſons he vſed againſt the Lutherians & other ſectes, the principal was taken from their newnes, & from the defectiō of the kirk, which they preached for that ſame occaſiō of their nouueltie; for otherwayes they could not haue teached, nor yet bin miniſters, Doctours or Paſtours. *If the doctrine of Chriſt* (ſayeth this peſtilēt Dauid Georgius) *and of his Apoſtles was true and perfect, certainlie the kirk that they planted and formed by their doctrine ſhold haue remained, and dured neceſſairly, and neuer haue decayed, ſeing that Ieſus ſaid, that the gates of hell ſhold neuer preuaill againſt hir: but now it is manifeſt & knowen to the whole World (according to youre owen commone ſaying) that the Antichriſt hath altogither ouerthrowen the doctrine of Chriſt & his Apoſtles, & the kirk founded and builded by them, as may be ſeene in the Papiſtrie: wherfor the doctrine of Chriſt, & of his Apoſtles was falſe and imperfect.* A blaſphemouſe concluſion, yet altogether neceſſarie, if the aſſumption were true, which ſundrie now adayes not onlie admittes to be true, but alſo taketh it for a ground moſt certaine, whervpon they haue builded their new kirk. *Abyſſus abyſſum inuocat.*

But to refute this perniciouſe opinion let

vs see and consider what honorable titles the kirk hath in the holie scriptures, & how faire promises ar made by God of his stabilitie and infallibilitie: she is called the *bodie*, the *fulnes*, the *spouse of Iesus Christ*, the *house of our Lord*, the *pillar and firmament or ground of truth*, *bought with his blood*, *his Welbeloued*, *his Dowe*, *his Vineard*, *his inheritance*, *his kirg lome*. &c. ouer faire & beautifull names to vanish so sone contraire to his bountiful promises. *I will marrie thee vnto me for ever, yea I will marrie thee vnto me in righteousnes iudgement & mercie.* &c. May I not say heer with S. Aug. *Hæc est mater vera, pia mater & casta intrinsecus vere sui dignitate ornata, non forinsecus meretricio fallente turpiter colorata.* This is the true mother, godlie and chaist mother, decked in Wardlie with the dignitie and maiestie of her husband, not shamefullie coloured ouer Wardly with a deceaning lie. and in deed as the same S. Aug. sayeth, *In ventre Ecclesiæ veritas manet: quisquis ab hoc ventre Ecclesiæ separatus fuerit, necesse est vt falsa loquatur, necesse est, inquam, vt falsa loquatur qui aut concipi noluit, aut quem conceptum mater excussit.* Within the belly or bosome of the kirk the veritie remaineth. Whosoever shalbe separated frome this bosome of the kirk, of necessitie he must speak lies, of necessitie, I say, he must speak lies, Who ether would not be cõceaued & ingendred, or els being cõceaued, the mother hath cast him out. But if shee hath become an harlotte & adultresse, shee hath made diuorse, shee hath violated the law of mariage, which God hath promist should be kepe in faithfulnes. I doubt greatlie if they be lauful childrē to God,

*Hose.* 2. 19.

*Tom.* 6. *cõtra ad Cath. cap.* 22.

*Tom.* 8. *in psal.* 57.

God, who calleth their mother à whore, *matrē adulterio patrē quærunt*: can any mā say more freelie that he is an heretik, nor to say that the kirk he followeth may & hath erred: shee who adoneth hir self so calelie to euerie futer, cannot be a true spouse, shee must be an hailotte. Excuse me if I say, that such men may be bastares, but the kirk of God wil remaine à virgin for euer, by the assistance & diligence of hir head & spouse: he was born of à virgin, he wil haue his membres & ofspring to haue that same honour, their true and spiritual mother being à virgin, because shee is his spouse. God must haue some thing out of the deuils power; *He hath made to him self a glorious kirk not hauing spot or wrincle, or anie such thing but that shee should be holy & without blame.* to wit in doctrine. If God be *ouerthrowen in his owne house*, he must be weaker then the deuill: which can not be granted, yea not thought, without execrable blasphemie. Whertor I must say with S. Aug. (whom I cite the more willinglie for that sundry of the protestāts alledge that he is theirs, notwithstāding he be their greatest enimie, at lest to their doctrine) *Credimus Ecclesiam Catholicam ipsa est Ecclesia Sancta, Ecclesia vna, Ecclesia vera, Ecclesia Catholica, contra hæreses omnes pugnans: pugnare potest expugnari non potest: hæreses omnes de illa existunt tanquam sarmenta inutilia de vite præcisa ipsa autem manet in radice sua, porta inferorum non vincent eam.* We beleeue the Catholik kirk, shee is the holy kirk the true kirk, the Catholik kirk fighting against all heresies, shee may

Eph 5.27.

Matt. 12. 29.

Tom 9. de symb. lib. 1. cap. 5.

fight

*fight, but shee can not be overcome, al heresies are gone out of hir, like vnprofitable branches out of the vyeyne. Shee (the kirk) dwelis remaine in hir owen roote: the gates of hell shal not ouercome hir.*

Let vs see the other promises made to hir, by hir head and maister, which ar so cleer & in so great nomber, that no man can doubt, except he that wil receaue no thing, but that onhe which hath passed by the tryal of his iudgement, to whose iudgement to stand, were to be without any iudgement. God promised, as I haue said oftymes, that the gates of hell, that is the power of Sathan by errour and heresie should not preuail against hir. Hath not Satan preuailled, if he hath caused hir to erre in teaching & authorizing fals doctrine? S. Aug. sayeth pulling wel. *Non insultent hæreticis per partes constituti, non se extollant, qui dicunt Ecce hic est Christus, ecce illic: Qui dicit ecce hic est, ecce illic ad partes inducit, Matth. 24 vnitatem promisit Deus. Reges in vnum collecti sunt, non per schismata dissipati sunt. Sed forte illa ciuitas, quæ mundum tenuit, aliquando euerteretur? absit: Deus fundauit eam in æternum: si ergo Deus fundauit eam in æternum, quid timet ne cadat firmamentum?* Let not the heretikes insult & triumphe being diuided in sects, let not thes magnifie & praise them self, who sayeth lo here is Christ, lo there. Who sayeth lo here is Christ, lo there, he inducth to factions. God did promise vnitie and concorde. The Kings were gathered to gether in one, not scattered by diuision. But perchance this citie, which hath comprehended & occupied the World, at length should ouerthrow? Not! God for his

Matt. 16. 18.

Tom 8 in Psal. 47.

Psal. 47.

God

*God hath founded and eſtabliſhed hir for euer. If thou he hath founded hir ſo euer, What feare ye? leaſt the*
Matt. 28. *firmamēt ſhould fall?* He promiſed alſo he ſhould
20. be with hir all wayes euē to the conſummatiō of the wold: if he left hir not one day, when
Ioan. 14. ſhould errour haue occupied hir? ſo ſhould the
16. holie ſpirit tary with hir for euer, & teach hir al veritie: al veritie & errour can not conſiſt togither. The father promiſed to his eternal Sonne, the ſame perpetual veritie for his
Iſa. 59. 21. ſeed. *I will make this my couenant with them ſayeth our Lord: My ſpirit that is vpon thee, & my Words, which I haue put in thy mouth, ſhal not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy ſeed ſayeth our Lord from henceforth euen for euer.* For his
Luc. 1. 33 kingdome ſhal haue no end. So ſayeth Daniel
cap. 7. 14. of his domination, which ſhalbe through al &
& 27. for euer. And micha ſayeth as far. Now behold
cap. 4. 7. the amplitude greatnes & authoritie. *I ſhal giue*
Pſal. 2. 8. *thee the heathens for thyn inheritance, and the endes of the earthe for thy poſſeſſion.* In an other place *al*
Pſal. 85. 9. *nations, whome thow haſt made, ſhall come & worſhipe before the o Lord & ſhal glorifie thy name.* Iſaias
2. 1. ſayeth: *In the laſt dayes ſhalbe prepared the mountaine of the houſe of our Lord in the toppe of the mountaines, and ſhalbe exalted aboue the hilles, and all nations ſhal flow to it*: not onlie Iſaias, but alſo the other prophets ſay the ſame. Moreouer the ſinnes of the children ſhall not take away his inheritance of veritie amonges the Chriſtians:
Pſal. 88. King Dauid aſſureth vs: *his ſeed Wil I make indure*
29. *for euer, and his throne as the dayes of the heauen. But*

*if his*

*if his children leave my lawe, and walk not in my iudgements, if they breake my ſtatutes & keepe not my commandements; then will I viſit their iniquities with a rodde & their ſinnes with ſtroke; yet my mercy will I not take from him, nor offend in my truth: my couenant will I not breake, &c.* Ye ſee that God wil keep his Sonnes heritage notwithſtanding of mans iniquitie.

But they who approue not this ſtabilitie and conſtancie of the kirk, anſwers that ſhee failleth not, as longe as ſhee heareth the voice & obeyeth the commandement of hir ſpouſe IESVS CHRIST, & is guyded by the holie ſpirit, following the word of God, which is perpetuallie ioyned with the holie ſpirit: but if ſhee leaue the word & obey not hir ſpouſe, ſhee may fail and erre. What is this other to ſay, then that the kirk cannot fail nor erre at all? For we haue ſhewen alreddie that there can be no ſuch ſeparation, nor diſobedience where vpon we haue concluded the certaine and perpetual veritie of the kirk, in reſpect of the perpetual and aſſured aſſiſtance of IESVS CHRIST and of his holy ſpirit in al veritie: for if ſhee were without hir head and gouernour, ſhee could no more be a kirk. In which caſe they might rather ſay ſhee were decayed and dead, not erred and failled. But nether of theſe can be true as we haue ſhewen by euident places of the ſcriptures. We muſt think that our Lord hath builded hir vpon a rock, as it becommeth his

Matth. 7. 24. wisdome, and not vpon the sandes, as fooles doo, whose howses can not stand because the ground is not sure.

As touching the promises, which some men pretendes to be conditionallie made to the kirk, because some promises are of that natures they must vnderstand that such promises toucheth onlie the particular, if they remaine in the kirk, if they follow out Lords commandement. God sayeth to Moses *Ecce est locus apud me & stabis supra petram* Behold there is a place by me, and thow shals stand vpon the rock: On this rock the kirk is builded, shee must be stabell: Shee is our Lords inheritance giuē to him by God his Father without anie condition: which may be shewen by great nomber of places of the scriptures. It dependeth not vpon mens vertue or vice, strength or weaknes, folie or wisdome: he hath taken the keeping of his owen right in to his owen hand: he wil not be spoiled by a mightier, because there is none mightier: if it had depended vpon our worthines, I doubt if Christ Iesus should haue had anie kirk at all; we must lay clayme to his infinit mercie, goodnes, & exceedinge loue by the which he hath promised not to abandonne his kirk, nor to suffer hir to go wronge: his grace is a sufficient shrowd againeſt al stormes, and a sure ancre in al dāger: he wil care for nothing in this world, if he be careles of his wealbeloued spouse, who is his doue, perfite and vndefiled.

Exod. 33. 21.

Matt. 12. 29.

Mar. 3. 27.

Can. 1. 7. 6. 8.

The ark of Noë was not surmonted by the flood,

flood; it was euer higher thē the water of the flood, which notwithstāding was higher then all the rest of the things vpon earth. Men, townes, hilles, mountaines were lower thē the water, which yet acknowledged the Ark to be aboue thē: for they drouned the rest, but lifted vp the Arke. *quia dominus supposuit manum: Be-cause our Lord did put his hand vnder it:* and what could surmount it, which was sustained by the mightie hād of our Lord? This was without anie condition: but who were to be saued, it behoued them to be therin: for to them the promise was conditionall. The Ark, if it had not had the special assistance of God, had bene ouerthrowen as the rest, who wanted that safegarde and protection. *Psal. 37. 23.*

The veritie of that figure is giuen to Christ our Sauiour without anie limitatiō or condition: but to the particulars, if they be therein. The water which out of the ark was mortall and deadlie, within it, serueth for lyf. So may we say of the kirk, *sola est, quæ intra se positos validæ caritatis compage custodit; vnde & aqua diluuij arcam quidem ad sublimiora sustulit, omnes autem quos extra arcam inuenit, extinxit. It is thee onlie who keepeth with a mightie hand those who ar within hir: where by the water of the deluge carried vp the ark on high, but wheresoeuer it found with out the ark, it destroyed.* Why shal not *Arca Ecclesia superior esse omnibus vndis & fluctibus erroris?* No thing can be in danger that constantlie remaineth in our Lords keeping, how *Aug. to. 10. ac tēp. 182.*

weake soeuer it be of it self, hauing strength of the keper.

But they wil say perchance that all these promises and perrogatiues ar ether to the kirk inuisible, or for the reuelation of the holie spirit made to euerie man in particular, where by they ar gouerned and called his. Let vs see, or rather let vs consider (seing it can not be seen) this inuisible kirk. I pray you read the places cited before, & ye shall see that the promises ar made to a visible companie. The salt of the earth: the light of the world: as a citie set vpon à mountaine: à candle sette vpon a candlestick: who heareth the kirk, heareth God, who contemneth hir, contemneth God: Who wil not here, nor obey the kirk should be to vs as an excommunicat personne. Shee is signified by the Arke of Noë: By the children of Israël in the desert: by the vyniard: by S. Peters shippe: by a mountaine: by the nettes caste in the sea: by à piller &c. what is here inuisible, or rather what can be visible to him who seeth not these things? he hath need of à Phisician, and not of reasons, who cannot see à shippe & nettes, an Arke of three hondreth cubites long, à vyniard, a citie, a candle vpon an candelstik à mountaine, à pillar, fyue or six hondreth thousand personnes to gither. what remedie for so desperate a blindnes in so woeful à sicknes? *Iubeas miserum esse libenter.* He must perish in his owen blindnes, who wil not opē his eyes. How can we acknowledge or obey

obey this inuisible Iudge? Where shal we find hir? *nusquam est si nusquam videtur, cùm non sit incorporea*: how can we be ioyned with hir? & out o hir bosom there is no saluatiõ. The kirk had charg to teach al nations & baptize them. I think it shalbe as difficil to hear as to see inuisible doctours, except we wil receaue the olde hob goblins for pastours. Shal we beleeue that the kirk of God hath neuer bene seene, becaule the doctrine teached now in sundrie places was neuer heard before, the doctours therof not being as yet borne? If the kirk was euer visible, it was that shee might be knowen & so followed. Vntill these men came shee was hid, now shee is knowen. why hath she changed hir nature? is it to deceaue vs? God forbid: shall we giue the cause wonne to the Anabaptists, with their foolish & new inuented synagoge? Which doubtles must be receaued according to this opinion: or if it be receaued in others, why shall it not be receaued in them? If they had yet remained inuisible, they had bene more worthie of credit. But what, anie thing is good enough to theis fantasticall spirits. *Notus in Iudea Deus*, God is not knowen but in his kirk, and by his kirk, seing shee is the pillar of veritie and trompet of his holie name. It is shee who hath discouered, assaulted, and condemned, yea and at last destroyed all heresies in euerie age, not by inuisibilitie, but by visible presence, in general councels, by dayly preaching and teaching

*Psal.* 75. 2.

of hir doctours and paſtours, and ſoueraigne decrees of hir miniſterial head. If ther be none of theſe things true, the kirk muſt be onlie a vaine phantaſticall imagination forged to abuſe men, lyke to the philoſophical ſtone, where foolish men imploye their lyfe, mynd, and ſubſtance to find right nought at laſt. *Quid amplius* (ſayeth S. Auguſtin) *dicturus ſum quam* Tom. 9. in Epiſt. Ion. tract. 2. *cæcos qui tam magnum montem non vident? qui contra lucernam in candelabro poſitam oculos claudunt.* What shal I ſay farther but that they ar blind Ibid. tract. 1. *who ſee not ſo great a mountaine? who cloſeth their eyes againſt the candle put on the candleſtik.* And in an other place. *Ecce mons implens* Daniel. 2. 35. *vniuerſam faciem terræ. Ecce ciuitas de qua dictum eſt:* Matt. 5. 14. *non poteſt ciuitas abſcondi ſuper montem conſtituta. Illi autem offendunt in montem, & cùm eis dicitur, aſcendite, non eſt mons, dicunt: facilius illuc faciem impingunt, quàm illic habitaculum quærunt.* Behold the mountaine filling the face of the whole earth. behold the citie of which it is ſaid: A citie ſette on an hil can not be hid. They (to wit the heretikes) do ſtrik them ſelfs againſt the hil. & when it is ſaid to them, go vp, they ſay, it is not the hill. They do more willinglie dash their face againſt that hill, nor ſeek any dwelling there. I muſt ſay with the ſame To. 8. Pſal. 56. S. Auguſtin. *O hæretica inſania, quod non vides, credis mecum: quod vides, negas. credis mecum Chriſtum exaltatum ſuper cælos, quod non vidimus; & negas gloriam eius ſuper omnem terram, quod videmus. O* heretical frowardnes, and obſtinate maddneſſe, thou beleeueſt with me that thou ſeeſt not; thou

*thou denyes that which thou seest, Thou believest with me that Christ is exalted above the heauēs, which we haue not seene; & thou denyest his glorie to be vpō all the earth, which we see.* And if I be not abused, the persecutions (which continued almost from Christs dayes to Cōstantin the greate, although not in al place & with lyke crueltie, wher many thousand martyrs did bestow their lyues) were against the visible kirk of that age: for if this new inuisible kirk had bene in those dayes shee had conserued al hir membres from danger, by meanes of hir inuisibilitie: And in deed al such men escaped the tyrannie of the most cruel Emperoures by that ring Gyges. or rather becaus none of these inuisible men as yet were forged. Shall the kirk of God haue no other refuge in persecutions (whither they come of tyranntes, or of heretiks oppugning the veritie) but to flee to the darknes of inuisibilitie (more fitte for the membres of Satan prince of darknes, then for the membres of IESVS CHRIST author of light) as Sepia to hir black blood or inke? God forbid. If they answer that they vnderstand by the inuisible kirk, the elect, who because they ar knowen onlie to God ar called inuisible, I answer that the same argument maketh the condemned persōnes as well to be inuisible, seing they ar knowen to God onlie in that qualitie, so all the world shalbe inuisible. Secondly seing that I am obliged to ioyne my self with the true kirk onlie: how shal I know hir being

*Plato 10. de repub.*

*The confession of faith art. 17. inferred in the alt. of parliament / ol. den the ted 1568. & 1597.*

knowē only to God? I say onlie that we found as long as they did reigne, a visibel, at least sensible, and most cruel persecution, against such as could not come out of the country: for they were constrained to subscribe and sweare that the present religion was good, albeit in their conscience they knew and were persuaded to the contrarie: which persecution was so cruel that the death it self had bin more tolerable: yea I persuade my self that if the Ministers wold haue proceeded by way of death against the Catholiks, that they should not haue wonne so meikil against them as they did then, by an extreme necessitie to which they put them. But to retourne to their inuisibilitie: we ar seeking à kirk to guyd vs, shee was inuisible before our dayes (and now we haue so manie kirks visible that we know not which to choose) why so longe inuisible, and why now seene? inuisible when shee might haue bin knowen, because ther was but few, and now visible when the great nomber maketh hir vncertaine to vs. These dark questions requireth a new Oedipus to solue them. I say that absolutlie shee must be knowen to vs, & not to God only: God of his infinit mercie, and goodnes, hath & wil communicate to vs his knowledge so far as it is necessarie for our saluation: but it is altogither necessarie for vs) to knowe the true kirk, seing shee is the only house whet God is surelie to be found, truelie serued, duelie obeyed and

od and eternal lyf mercifullie obteined, as is
ſufficientlie proued before. If I ſhould promiſe
à thouſand pound to any mã, & after ſend him
to an inuiſible Treſourer to be payed, ſhould
he not haue iuſt occaſion to think me an abu-
ſer? God hath promiſt truelie to his Sonne by
the mouth of Dauid that *his ſeed ſhal remaine for* Pſal. 88.
*euer, & his throne ſhalbe as the Sunne before him, &* 36.
*lyke to the Moone perfect for euer*: if the Sunne and
the Mone, when they ar in their great clear-
nes be inuiſible, I vnderſtand no thing. The
kirk neuer hath bene obſcured ſo far by per-
ſecutions, but ſhee might be knowen, beſy-
des the miſerable blindnes of the Iewes &
Gentils, & malicioufe obſtinacie of heretiks,
or factioufe ſeparation of ſchiſmatiks. What?
Wil they make the enimies of God to be eaſe-
lie ſeene & found, wher his ſeruants & frends
dare not shew thẽ ſelues? Then God man hyde
and keep cloſe his freinds for feare that Satan
ſpoille him: he ſhall haue onlie ſuch as he may
ſteale without the deuils knowledge by mea-
nes of the inuiſibilitie, changed now in to à
viſibilitie, by vertue of an act of parliamẽt hol-
den at Edenbrugh without approbatiõ, in the
Quenes M. abſence the year of God 1560. ra-
tified by a parliament of lyk force in his Maie-
ſties minoritie 1567. But I paſſe this *nec veterum*
*memini, laterue malorum*. The deuil ſhould fight
againſt the members of the kirk, but ſhould
not preuail, becauſe the victorie ſhould be the-
irs, and they for their victorie ſhould be crou-
ned,

ned, which can not be without battail. *Nam*
2. Tim. 2. 5. *qui certat in agone, non coronatur nisi legitimè certauerit. And if anie man stryue for a maistrie, he is not crouned except he stryue as he ought to doo.* And
2. Tim. 4. 7. Saint Paul sayeth of him self, *Bonum certamen certaui, cursum consummaui, fidem seruaui: in reliquo reposita est mihi corona iustitiæ, quam reddet mihi Dominus in die illa iustus iudex &c. I haue fought a good fight, I haue consumate my course, I haue kept the faith. Concerning the rest, there is laid vp for me a crovvne of iustice, which our Lord vvil render to me in the last day, a iust iudge.*

If any think hir inuisible becauſe shee can not be ſeene all at one tyme, but only in hir partes: by that ſame reaſon they may think hilles & mountaines inuiſible, or rather no thing in the world tobe viſible, nether man nor beaſt, nor other thing, great nor ſmal; becauſe no thing can be ſeene al at one inſtant, one part cutting away the ſight of an other, as may be ſeene by daylie experience.

As to them who thinketh that all Gods promiſes appertieneth to the particulares, whome he aſſiſts by a ſecret and particular inſpiration, & fortifieth by an internall and inward conſolation; whereof the holy ſpirit is called the ſpirit of conſolation: we haue refuted them before, and if this opinion were true, as it is not, it wold confirme & ſtrengthen our ſentence: For if the ſpirit of veritie be geuen to euerie man in particular, meikil more to all togither. So the kirk hauing the ſpirit in ſo great abon-

abondance could not erre. And doubtles naturall reason wil constraine vs to think that if the particular can not erre (which must be if euerie man be assisted with the holy spirit according to Gods solēne promises (the pastours of the kirk shoul lesse be subiect to errour, because of their office, seing that the charge is geuen to them to teach and & guyd the faithfull that they be not caried away with euerie wind of doctrine, except they wil say that pastours be altogither vnneedful, seing that the holie spirit hath taken the office vpon him to guyd euerie one in particular, or that the particular men hath the holie spirit in all abondance, which is denyed to the pastours, who for that cause may erre, wheras the particular is assured, an opinion ridiculouse and perniciouse, although it be embraced by manie now adayes. But this opinion of priuat inspiration is false, becaus our Lord (to whom all appartaineth by the gift of his Father) made theis promises to the Apostles when he sent them as maisters, gouernours, and pastours of his kirk, to preach and teach throughout the whole world, and therfor it was for the publik charge, duetie, and vtilitie of the kirk vniuersall. *In omnem terram exiuit sonus eorum, & in fines orbis terra verba eorum.* Moreouer this opinion is absurd, for if euery man hath the holy spirit, in such abondance, no man could erre, but wold say the truth in al thinges (I mean in maters of faith) yea no man could haue need of à ma-

*Eph. 4. 14.*

*Psal. 18. 5. Rom. 10. 18.*

ster

ster or pastour, (as is said) euerie one being most sufficientlie instructed by the holie spirit, who can not erre: vpon theis vaine imaginatiõs the Anabaptists haue builded their folies. Neuertheles it must not be thought that we deny that the holie spirit doeth assist the particulares: For he assisteth them indeed with his grace, wherby they ar moued to obey, consent, & beleue the doctrine of the kirk, & to keep the vnitie required therin, but not to command, guyd, and gouerne, which appartteineth onlie to the pastours, as is said.

There resteth yet two obiectiõs against the stabilitie of the kirk in all veritie. The first is, that the particular kirk may erre, which may be shewẽ by manie exãples: & therfor the kirk Catholik and vniuersal may erre. The second is, that the kirk Catholik is represented by a general Councel: but the generall Coũcel may erre, and hath erred: then the Catholik and vniuersal kirk may erre. To confirme the first obiection they collect against the Iewes kirk the faultes committed frome the beginning of the world to our Lords tyme: to the which albeit it be easie to answer, yet because it is not our question, who ar speaking of the Christian kirk, I wil passe it for the present, as making nothing against vs. I say only that they shal not be abil to shew anie errour in the Iewes kirk approued by publik consent. For the sentence of death pronounced by Caiphas against our Lord was no wayes erronious of it self,

(if we

(if we wold lay asyd the wicked mynd from whence it proceded) seing it was according to our Maisters will (*quia passus est, quia voluit*) and Gods owen decree of his infinit mercy & loue towards mankind. And S. Iohn approueth it as comming of the holy spirit, who prophecied by the mouth of a wicked man. The words of the Euangelest ar these: *But one of them named Caiphas, being the high priest of that year, said to them, you know nothing, neither doe you consider that it is expedient for vs that one man die for the people, and the wholl nation perish not. And this he said not of him self, but being high priest of that year, he prophesied that Iesus should die for the nation, and not only for the nation, but gather into one the children of God, that were desperssed.* Io. 11. 49. VVherby we may vnderstand the qualitie of the decree, not withstanding the wickednes of the instrument. God blisssed his people by Balaams mouth: but this is more solemne, seing that IESVS CHRIST is put in possession of his inheritance by the sentence and decree of the synagoge, pronounced by Caiphas at that time high priest, Christ being declared to be he, who was to redeeme the world with his death, by the which the sacrifice of Aaron was to take end, the synagoge hauing resigned ouer al right to the true heire, and that by a general consent, to the Iewes greatter and inexcusable condemnation. Num. 23.

As to the rest of the argument it followeth not. The particular may erre, ergo the general may

may erre: For the partes (which ar as it were particulars (of the elements do perish euerie day, the elements notwithstanding doe remaine, yea and recouer at one syd, what they loose at the other: for it is impossible that the whole elements can perish all at one tyme, I meane naturallie.

So we see men die euerie day and that in great nōbers at some times, yet because there commeth others in their place, man can not perish altogether, because God hath blissed him, and al liuing things by these words *Crescite & multiplicamini*. Arist. wold haue answered *homo non moritur, sed hic homo*. And which is more, as man in particular remaining man, that is, reteining the nature and proprieties of man, cannot die (for if he die he ceasseth to be man) so the particular kirk remaining a kirk, that is remaining in the doctrine, vnion, and communion of the Catholique kirk, cannot erre: for if she fal in errour of doctrine generally receaued and approued, withdrawing hir self from the holie Catholique kirk, shee is no more a kirk, but as à dead body possessed by schisme and heresie. But if shee remaine in obedience and vnion with the Catholique kirk, albeit shee be assaulted with anie sicknes, or troubled with any wound of errour, yet by the lyf, strength, and health of the whole body of the Catholik kirk, shee may recouer hir health. Euen as we see the finger being cut from the body,

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the interne and inward forme being loſt, it looſeth the nature of a finger, although the material part remaineth as before; But remaining ioyned and vnited with the body, notwithſtanding any infirmitie or wound, it may be cured and healed, by reaſon of the lyfe and health of the reſt of the body with the which it is conioyned. A greene tree by violence of ſtormie wind, froſt, or ſeaſon of year, may looſe the leaues or branches ſome tyme, which the ſpring or ſpace of tyme will bring againe: but if the ſtock be rotten or drawen out of the ground, there is no hope of leaues, meikel leſſe of branches, he muſt plant an other tree, who wold ſee leaues or branches there againe: which experience can not be ſought in the kirk: FOR IESVS CHRIST wil plant no other; and I know not who could take the charge in his place, for it behoued him to do better then our Lord hath donne before him, wherby the promiſes made to the perpetual kirk might once be accomplished, ſeing that Chriſts kirk hath failed by interuption, as they ſay: which can not be, notwithſtanding the faillinge of ſome partes, prouyding the noble partes doe keep their integritie: but they being loſt, there is no meanes to ſet vp againe that kirk; they may perchance ſett vp an other, if they haue receaued that power. And thus far for the firſt obiection.

As to the ſecond we receaue the propoſition as good and true, if they vnderſtand à gene-

generall Councel laufully called, holden, concluded, & confirmed: for doubtles fic à councel repreſenteth the Catholique and vniuerſal kirk, which we beleeue can not erre: but that fic councels hath erred or could erre, we deny plainlie Yet to proue their ſaying, they alledge that the councels ar contrarie one to an other, which can not be but errour of one, or both the parties. And farther, councels haue corrected councels, as ſayeth S. Aug. but correction (ſay they) preſuppoſeth errour: For the proofe of the firſt they bring examples ether of particular & prouincial ſynods againſt generall councels: or conuenticles of heretiks againſt à general, or els councels ſuſpect and diſallowed againſt à lauful and general: Wherfor that proueth nothing againſt vs, no more, then maketh againſt the authoritie of à lauful parliament (*ſi parua licet componere magnis*) the conuentions holden in diuers ſhyres, being one againſt an other, or anie of them againſt a iuſt and lauful parliament: or yet à ſeditiouſe aſſemblie of rebelliouſe perſonnes ryſing againſt their lauful Prince: or againſt a parliament of the whole eſtates called, holden, concluded, and confirmed by the free authoritie of a iuſt & lawful Prince in his maioritie. There can not be anie contradiction in a Kings or commune Wealth edicts, or actes, for correcting, or agreing togeather, the opinions of particular townes or ſhyres, or for condemning of rebelles, and their famouſe libelles

belles: or by improuing of actes neuer approued by his forfathers; yea nor for changing of any thing of policie in a better forme being admonished by good experience, although it had bin otherwayes ordained by a parliament before; prouyding the matters of them selues were indifferēt. Where it is to be noted first, that we speak here of general Councels, and nor of particulare, which as they may erre, so ought they to be corrected by the general (as meaneth S. Augustin against the Donatists) if there be anie thing wrong. Secondlie it is to be noted, that this dispute should be taken of thinges apperteining and concerning the substance of faith, wher there can be no changing or varietie, meikel les contrarietie: for that which is once veritie remaineth euer veritie, becaus the veritie is but one, which may be made cleare and plaine, not changed in the contrarie. But things apperteining to maners, ciuil discipline, commone policie, and ceremonies, becaus they touch oftentimes but singular mens actions, or certaine countryes and persōnes, or els ar made by reason of the tyme; not onlie may they be changed, the circumstances being taken away, but some tyme of necessitie must be changed, except men wilfullie wold loose all: of which things. S. Aug. may be vnderstood: for it is certaine he could not vnderstand of matters of faith, seing in his dayes there was but two general Councels holden

(except ye wil compt the Councel holden by the Apoſtles at Ieruſalem for one) the firſt of Nice, and the firſt of Conſtantinople, which with one conſent are eſtemed to be without errour, and ſo could not receaue correction the one, from the other. Thirdlie it is to be noted that we vnderſtand the only Concluſions, which ar taken in the general councels, & not al things which ar done or ſaid during the tyme the councels holde, as in diſputes and conference; which things procedeth of men, and may therfore be conioyned with errour: and ſo can ſerue for no argument againſt our ſentence. Although the matter requireth a more ample diſcourſe (if our intention had bin to expouud this ſubiect at length) yet this may ſerue for the preſent.

But ere I paſſe farther I wold pray you not to miſtake me in my former diſcourſe (for I ſee many miſtaken in the ſame matter) as if I wold thruſt doune, and tread vnder foot, or diminish the authoritie of the holie ſcriptures, by hauing recourſe to the kirk in ſeeking the true ſence of them: we acknowlege them both in equall dignitie, veritie, and certaintie, becauſe they ar both of the holie ſpirit, hauing their vertue & force of him, as the Ambaſſadour and ambaſſe or commiſſion of the King or Prince who ſendeth them. The one derogateth nothing from the other: for if there be anie thing obſcure in the cõmiſſion, why may we not ask the Ambaſſadours iudgment

ment without anie preiudice of his commiſſion? or rather as appertaining to him, ſhal we not ask his iudgement? for the letters oftentimes ar verie ſhorte conteining briefflie the matter, whoſe more ample declaration is referred to the Ambaſſadour, who for that cauſe is ſent with letters of credit, he otherwayes not being neceſſarie, becauſe the letters might do all, except they might not authorize them ſelues.

The kirk is Gods Ambaſſadour ſent to declare his will, hauing the ſcriptures for letters of Commiſſion and credit, & that in moſt ample forme; as we haue ſhewen before: why ſhal not hir voice be heard before al others in declaring the true meaning of hir commiſſion? ſhal I ask of anie other why ſhee was ſent? The kirk and the ſcriptures ar two lawful ſiſters of one father, none of them ſhould be caſte out, *Alterius ſit poſcit opem res & coniurat amicè.* Therefor Sainct Auguſtin ſayeth, that we keep the veritie of the ſcriptures, when we do that which is approued by the whole kirk, whome we ſee ſo wel recommended to vs by the authoritie of the ſame ſcriptures, as that which can not deceaue vs, becauſe it is the holie writ. So without anie preference we proue the ſcriptures by the kirk, and by hir alſo the true ſence of them, as the commiſſion and the intelligence therof, is authorized by the Ambaſſadour. *To 9. con. Creſc. lib.*

IESVS-CHRIST proued him ſelf to be

the true Messias promisſed to the Iewes, and that by the prophetes and law: becauſe all things were compleat in him, that were foreſpoken by them to be in the true Messias The ſame was donne by the Apoſtles and is donne now euerie day againſt the Iewes: yet it is not to be concluded that the prophetes and law ar preferred before our Lord. It is inough that the witnes be of ſufficient credit and authoritie with the parties. If any man denie this dignitie to the kirk, I wil pray him to pardon me, if I ſay he doeth that which Satan deſyreth moſt: for he laboreth to take away the three thinges which onlie doe aſſure vs of our Maiſter and Lord IESVS CHRIST, to wit, the kirk, ſcriptures, and miracles, which may be eaſelie ſeene: for the kirk being eſteemed a liar, and worthie of no credit, what can be thought of the ſcriptures and miracles, which we know by the kirk only: but if the kirk be (as shee should) of ſufficient authoritie with al true Chriſtians, thoſe thinges can not be called in doubt. And why should not hir depoſition be heard, or rather hir iudgement receaued, in whatſoeuer mater of religion, as a thing apperteining iuſtlie to hir, and which shee may better know then any other, by reaſon of the ſtrait alliance betwixt hir head and ſpouſe IESVS CHRIST, and hir? Shal euerie man know the will of the Lord, and ſenſe of his commandements, and his deare ſpouſe onlie shalbe ignorant? Then in vaine

in vaine hath he kiſſed hir with the kiſſe of his mouth: in vaine hath he put his left hand vnder hir head, and with his right hand in vaine hath he embraced hir, in vain hath he brought hir into his chambers, if any man hath greatter priuiledge then shee; which muſt be, if euerie man should take that, which he thinkes good and true, and not that which the kirk thinketh and declareth good and true. And in very deed, none of theſe new fictious ſectes can haue credit till they haue perſuaded their auditours that the ſpouſe of our Lord is an vnworthy liar. O blaſphemous tounges, and foolish heares, who ſo rashlie geue credit, to a thing of it ſelf ſo incredible, & ſo pernicious when it is receaued. Chriſt commandeth vs to hear the kirk, Knox, and Caluin forbiddeth vs, and wil, we follow only the ſcriptures, that is their, or our owen iudgemẽt. Should it be doubted to whom we should here obey? I muſt offorce receaue the iudge ordained by the Prince, and not to conſtitute my ſelf, or anie other in that place, for that were a cryme of læſmaieſtie, and worthie of a moſt ſeuere punition, to ſerue for example to all other preſumptious perſonnes. Can. 1. 1. 2. 6.

Now if we should preferre the kirk before the ſcriptures (which we do not, although we preferre hir before priuat mens interpretation forged now of new, which when we contemne and reiect, they deceptfully alledge vs to deſpiſe the ſcriptures) who could iuſtlie be of-

fended with vs, seing shee is the spouse of our Lord and Maister, and the scriptures the contract of mariage betwixt them? who doubteth but the spouse is to be preferred before the contract of mariage? Moreouer the scriptures are made for the kirk, and not the kirk for the scriptures: *The sabboth was made for man, and not man for the sabboth*, sayeth our Lord. And also the kirk was before the scriptures, & shalbe after them. For the kirk triumphant shal haue no need of theis memories and directions, hauing the plenitude of al knowledge & veritie in the contemplation of him, in whom can be no ignorance, *in cuius lumine videbimus lumen: satiabimur enim cùm apparuerit eius gloria.* And last of al, our Maister & Lord died for the kirk, & not for the scriptures: the pryce should make the matter more precious. VVherfor shee must haue some prerogatiue, seing shee lacketh nothing that the scriptures haue, and hath manie things which nowayes can be attributed to the scriptures? here I may say with S. Augustin. *Me piget eam* (Ecclesiam) *commendare verbis meis, & hæreticos nõ pudet eam oppugnare verbis suis, I am in paine to praise hir* (to wit the kirk) *by my words: and heretiks ar not ashamed to assault hir with their words.* But it may be asked seing it is so, to what end serueth the scriptures? suffer me to vse à familiare example to declare, & expound à difficill and obscure matter: we see by daylie experience the blind (notwithstanding he haue a gúyd, on whom he dependeth and in whome

Matt. 2. 27.

To. de vnitate Eccle. c. 10.

whome he trusteth) seek for à staff by meanes of his guyd, wherby he may be more habill to follow him ouer high mountaines and rockes, riuers and myres, saue him self from stockes & stonnes in the way, and precepices or down-falles besides the way, and defend him self from bytting of dogges wher he shal passe. The kirk (who often in the scriptures is compared to the moune, and to a body) of hir self blind, having the light and sight of hir Sunne and head IESVS CHRIST, hath for hir guyd the holy spirit, by whose meanes shee hath the staff of the scriptures, wherby shee in following hir guyd & leader surmounteth more easelie the high mountaines of spiritual & supernatural difficulties, and rockes of naturall subtilities, passeth ouer the deepe riuers of tribulation and persecution, and myres of vyce, saueth hir self frome stumbling stockes and stonnes of this present lyf, and precipices of schisme and heresie, not standing to goe the straght way for the sclandrous tounges of the one or the other. This is donne to hold vs in exercise of al vertuous humilitie and good actions: God doth nothing without good and iust reason: *sed quis scrutator est maiestatis opprimetur à gloria.* This staffe which our mother hath receaued of hir guyd should nether be violentlie nor craftelie taken from hir, to abuse or beat hir; it is good in hir hand, to whose vse it was prepared; It is violence and spolitation, if it be found any other where: It appertaineth

onlie to hir and hirs: as geuen for hir ſeruice. Other men haue no part by iuſt tytle.

And to conclude this diſpute of perpetual veritie in the kirk (for that is my principal motiue to ſeek to the kirk) it can not be thought with good reaſon that God hath ſuffered his kirk & welbeloued ſpouſe, to whom he hath made ſo many great and notable promiſes, geuen ſo high titels, and honored with the mariage & death of his onlie Sonne, hath ſuffered (I ſay) his kirk to perish in hir chyldhood and firſt age, for lack to haue continued in hir the lyf of veritie, which hath bene loſt euer ſince the Apoſtles dayes, if we wil beleue ſome men. Shal we not rather think that God is merciful without repentinge him, & conſtãt in his liberal promiſes; and that ſic peſtilent opinions ar inuented onlie by preſumptious braines, whoſe vaine imaginations could haue no place if the kirk keepe hir authoritie, which they wold gladie ouerthrow to eſtabliſh and authorize their nouelties, by the which, they whold haue vs beleue that God is à liar: For what is it other to cal and think God a liar, then to ſay that nether is it, not can it be true, which he hath ſaid and promiſed. S. Auguſtin diſputinge againſt the Donatiſts of the greatnes and amplitude of the kirk, maketh almoſt the lyke concluſion. *Quaſi aliud ſit prophetiam crimine falſitatis arguere, quàm dicere quæ prænunciauit non poſſe compleri: hoc eſt enim dicere, non eſſe prophetiam ſed pſeudoprophetiam.* As if it were any other

*de vnitate Eccleſiæ c. 9. To. 7.*

*other thing to accuse the prophecie of falshood then to say that, which it had foreſpoken could not be compleit: for that were as meikel as to say that it were not a prophecie, but a fals prophecie, or lie.*

Becauſe I haue made mention now ſundry tymes of S. Auguſtin, and ſome other ancient writers, and ſhould be ouer prolix, if I ſhould cite al the places which may be proper here, I will pray the learned reader to take the paines to ſee and read diligentlie. S. Auguſtin *de vtilitate credendi ad Honoratum*, and *de vnitate Eccleſiæ contra Petiliani Donatiſtæ epiſtolam*. & Tertulian *de præſcriptionibus aduerſus hæreticos* To thoſe may be adioyned S. Cyprian *de vnitate Eccleſiæ*, & Vincentius Lirinenſis *aduerſus prophanas nouitates*.

I know ſundry wold be glad to read theſe bookes, who cannot haue them; to whoſe iuſt deſyre I wold willinglie ſatisfie, if I had the meanes. In the meane tyme, if I ſhal gather out ſome proprieties, which the ancients haue noted in the true kirk and, paſtours, and alſo fals kirk and fals paſtours, no man iuſtlie can be offended

1 Antiquitas.
2 Vnitas
3 Conſenſus & concordia.
4 Multitudo idem ſentiencium
5 Amplitudo per orbem terrarum.
6 Maiorum traditio

7 Maieſtas etiam regibus ipſis venerenda & culta.
8 Paſtorum ſucceſſio.

9 Perpetuitas.
10 Viſibilitas.

1 Nouitas.
2 Schiſmata.
3 Diſſenſio ac diſcordia.
4 Paucitas idem ſentiendium
5 Auguſtia in angulis.

6 Maiorum, etiam ſuorum contemptus.
7 Obſcuritas, vitiata vitæ cupidine, fuis neglecta.
8 Sibi ſuccedere & in ſe deſinere.
9 Nupera origo.
10 Inuiſibilitas.

11 Error.

12 Veritas.
12 Conſtantia in eadem perſtrunque doctrina.
13 Firmitas contra omnes omnium hoſtium incurſus
14 In iis quæ ad nominis Chriſtiani propagationem pertinent, diligentia.
15 Doctrinæ vniuerſæ.
16 Victoriæ contra hoſtes hæreticos & ſubtiliſsimos.
17 Animorum ſecure audiendæ quia, ſine errore.
18 Humanitas & modeſtia
19 Ordo & diſciplina.
20 Certa fides & minime dubia.
21 Fidei regula Chriſtianis Eccleſia, quia Dei tabernaculum in ſole poſitum & vitis frugifera Domini manu plantata.
22 Error.
23 Inconſtantia in ſua perſtrunque doctrina.
24 Infirmitas, aui breuitate cognita.
25 In iiſdem vel propagandis inertia, vel exercendis perſecutionibus, quia deficit, non erigit.
26 Priuata opinion.
27 Infelices, eaq; contra ſuos pugnæ.
28 Nullum ad firmandos animos pondus, quia agnoſcit ſe errori obnoxium
29 Superbia & inſtantia plus quam Theſſonica.
30 Ataxia & furibi conturbatio.
31 Perpetuo inquietio, aut vetius fluctuatio.
32 Apud hæreticos ſibi quiſque regula eſt, quia in ſenſu ſuo latebras quærunt, vt ſarmentitia inuenilia a vera reſecta facile agnoſcas.

I haue put theſe two rancks the one oppoſite to the other, to know what the Miniſters will approue, or improue in anie of them: as to vs, we firmly beleue that the qualities mẽtioned in the firſt doe apperteine to the true kirk onlie; and ar found in the Catholik, Apoſtolik, Romaine kirk onlie; which we conſtantlie beleue to be the true & onlie kirk, becauſe we find none but hir, to whome ſic notable promiſes hath bene made; or in whome they haue bene accomplished, but in hir onlie. Wherfore if the Miniſters wil haue vs to leaue the place where we are, as being vnfytte for our ſaluation, becauſe the qualities which we alledge ar not to be found in hir, they muſt

shew

shew vs an other, whet we shal find them, seeing they are altogether necessarie to be found in the spouse of IESVS CHRIST: for otherwayes ether will they trauell in vaine, or we change lyk fooles, changing for the worse, and leaving à kirk, which (as we ar surelie persuaded) is sure & can not erre, to follow à companie that they them selues, who inuiteth vs, assureth vs to be vnsure, affirming that it is subiect to errour so far, that God him self can not keep it therfro, at least hath not kept it, notwithstanding of his manyfold promises. Doubtles whosoeuer persuadeth vs that the house, where he wold haue vs enter, is not sure, consequentlie persuadeth vs (by presenting vs the danger which may arryue) not to enter therein, except he be a foole, or think vs fooles. It shal not be needful here that the Ministers accuse, or speek euill of any other man: but rather speak good of them selues, prouyding they proue it well, shewing that they haue the kirk *Dominam & matrem gentium* indued with the notable and excellēt qualities required in the true kirk, & can not be found but amonge them, & theirs. It will not content vs (if we be carefull, as we should be, of our saluatiō) to say that our kirk is euil, they must proue that their owē is good. I say this because in place to proue thē selues to haue the kirk, they raill aganist the vyce of the Catholiks, as if our sinnes made thē à good right, or they them selues were without sinne.

Many

Many haue left the Catholik kirk, and yet haue not followed them, but haue taken an other partie. Many also haue fled frome vicious Catholiks, & haue entered amonges more vicious Protestãts: for I heare of none, as yet, who ar become better men, for the leauing of vs, or being out of our kirk. I call their conscience and our whole country to be witnes. Iam sure that Luther and Caluin first inuenters or renewers of this religion, acknowledgeth that the world is become worse since the comming of their new Euangell. I doubt not but they know what is Caluins opinion here aboute seing the estimation they haue of him. Luther speeketh plainlie. *Mundus indies ex hac doctrina fit prior: homines duo antea, nunc septem diabolis obsidentur, diabolus nunc plena coborte homines inuadit, vt sub clara Euangelij luce multò sint quàm antea sub Papatu auariores, aſſutiores, fraudulentiores, libidinoſiores, procaciores ac peiores.* The Worldle becommeth daylie more Wicked by this doctrine: before men Were beſieged by one deuill, noW they ar beſeiged by ſeuen. The deuill noW doeth aſſaile men With a Whole bãd of deuils, ſo that vnder the cleare light of the Euangell men ar become meakel more couetous, more craftie, more deceptfull, more cruell, more lecherous, more shamleſſe and more Wicked, then before Vnder the Papiſtrie. An other of theis good brethrine sayeth almost the same, *Vt totus mundus agnoſcat eos non eſſe Papiſtas, nec bonis operibus quicquam fidere, illorum operum nullum exercent penitus, ſeiunij loco comeſſationibus & perpotationibus noctẽ diẽque vacant; Vbi pauper-*

*Smidelius.*

*pauperibus benignè facere oportebat, eos deglutiunt & exoriantur precationes vertunt in iuramenta, blasphemias & diuini nominis exetationes, idque tam perditè, vt Christus ne ab ipsis quidem Turcis hodie tantopere blasphemetur. Demum pro humilitate regnat passim superbia, fastus, elatio; atque hoc vniuersum vitæ genus, ab illis Euangelijs discitur institutum.* That all the World may know them not to be Papists, nor truste in good Works, they exercise none at all of theis Works; in place of fasting they employ their tyme night & day in extraordinarie eating and drinking. Where they should haue behaued them selues liberallie and bountefullie towards the poore, they deuoore them, & asist were plackes of the skinne of them: they change their prayers in to oothes, blasphemies, and exetrations of Gods name, and that so desperatlie, that Christ is not this day so greatlie blasphemed amongest the Turkes them selues. finallie in place of humilitie doeth reigne throughall, pryd, disdaine, presumption and they cal al this sort and maner of lyff, a trade euangelik. If theſe men saye true, the matter is euill mended, and we haue lytill occasion to change. I may truely say that they haue made our men worse, and haue not mended their owen. That we may say with Tertulian that *Plantibus ruinam, non iacentibus elenatio. Deum operantur.* If true pastours should be knowen by their works, I leaue yow to iudge what shal be thought of theis new Ecclesiastical order & new kirk, where so few good fruictes ar to be found by thair owin confession. It is an euil brewing that is not good in the newing: I think the Ministers of Scotland wold

*de prescriptionibus aduersus haer.*

wold say as meikel of their flock, if they wold lay to their conscience the hand, that they haue laid to so meikell kirk geare so wrongfullie. At this tyme I will say no more, but (abyding their answer) pray God grant vs al, for his infinite mercies sake, his trueth and grace that we may know his veritie & follow his commād. And this meikell touching the first head, and reasons which moueth me to seek & cleame to the kirk and offer to acknowledge the Ministers, if they haue hire now to the nixt article.

THE house of God, that is, the kirk being found, I must adresse my self to them, who haue the power & charge to lette me in, who haue the keyes, who may not onlie shew me the infinite treasures of Gods goodnes towardes vs, with his manyfold mercies and grace, but also will, and may by vertue of their charge make me partaker thereof being grafted in the tree of lyf by participation of the holie sacraments and knowledge of the true faith, & receauing of the same: that is, I must go to the true and lawsul pastours and prelats, whome I must know, not by the execution of that charge (albeit that be also required) but by the power they haue receaued to execute sic a charge. For it is not a certaine

taine and ſolide proofe, that anie man is a lawful magiſtrat, if it may be shewen that he hath geuen out ſundry ſentences and decrees; or that he hath cauſed execution of ſundry men to death (for thoſe thinges ar done oftentymes by wrongfull and tyranicall vſurpers) but the power he hath to pronounce and execute decrees, is required: otherwayes the fact should make the magiſtrate, and not the authoritie, which is contrarie to al good reaſon. So I aske not now, who taketh vpon them the offices & functions of paſtours, but who haue that power, that is, who haue the lawful power and miſſion, which is ſo neceſſarie in the paſtours of the kirk, that although anie man should haue the doctrine as pure as the Apoſtles them ſelues, with lyke knowledge; yet should he not be receaued as a paſtour, except he haue the vocation of them, who haue the power to giue it him, *nemo potest in alium conferre quod ipſe non habet.* I am aſſured that the Miniſters wil not ſuffer within their iuriſdiction anie man to ſtart vp at his owen hand of his particular and priuat authority making aſſemblies apart, although he should preach the ſame doctrine, and adminiſter the ſacramentes in the ſame faſhion grounded on the confeſſion of faith, now receaued by the whole Miniſterie of Scotland; which confeſſion they force, or wold force al men to ſubſcribe. The puritie of the doctrine wold not ſtoppe them to condemne him

him as a seditious schismatik, seing he had no authoritie, or (albeit he had the authoritie) if he lacketh the vnity required in the kirk: for doubtles although he had the vocation as lawful, as they can giue him, yet because of his schisme, he should be esteemed to haue iustlie lost it, albeit in other things he keepeth the same doctrine in al respectes; for the nature of schisme is sic, that as the diuision of anie member from the body, bringeth certaine death and priuation of lyf (which cannot be had but in, and with the whole) so doeth schisme in the kirk, to him, who is deuyded frome the kirk. The Donatists may serue for example, who in the begining were but schismatiks, yet at last by there diuision did fall in corruption of doctrine and become heretikes; euen as the member which is cut of, being depriued of the lyf (which it had in the whole body) of necessitie at last must rotte. Siclyk Lucifer Bishope, before Catholik, by his schisme did lose him self, although he did approue the Councel of Nice in all poinctes; how detestable the cryme of schisme is before God, may easelie be iudged by Core Dathan and Abiron, whose punition was more fearful and terrible, nor theis, who made and adored the golden calf, notwithstanding of their idolatrie.

But to retorne to our purpos, it is altogether required, that the true doctrine and lawful power be ioyned together in those, who wold com-

command and rule in the houſe of God: the law maketh vs al ſubiect and equal: the power and authoritie (which ſhold be giuen by him, who hath it) maketh the diſtinction and difference betwixt vs, and geueth charge to one aboue the others: for what domination or commandement had S. Peter S Paul and the reſt of the Apoſtles ouer the kirk of God, till they receaued that charge and authoritie of IESVS CHRIST him ſelf, to whome apperteined the ſouueraine domination? For al being his, no man could command except he had receaued power and comiſſion of him: Nor yet anie man obey to an other, vnles he were aſſured of the commiſſion. We ſee that Princes punish ſeuerelie, but iuſtlie and neceſſarilie, ſic as take on them to command without charge: for of theis vſurpations (if they be ſuffered) commeth open rebellion againſt the prince, oppreſſion of the ſubiects, and wrack of the whole commone wealth. Al is not done at the firſt inſtant, piece and piece men proceede both in vertue and vyce, *nemo repente fit turpiſſimus*. There be certaine degrees to that high work of plaine rebellion and outcaſting of the lauful & ſouueraine magiſtrate: he who maketh the firſt breache, giueth the firſt blow to his prince. Wherefor if the beginner ſhould fill vp with his owen dead body the breach that he had made, he ſhould find few followers: the prince ſparing the firſt inuiteth others, and at laſt is conſtrained to pu-

nish many, who wold not, at the beginning punish one: *Crudelis est humanitas, quæ dum vni parcit, multos perdit.*

*de notis Ecclesiæ.*

In this general, I doubt not but the Miniſters and I shall agree verie easely: For I see Beza one of their brethrin auoucheth that none should command, or haue charge in the houſe of God except ſic as ar ſent by God, which ſending he wil haue ruled according to the order which God him ſelf hath eſtablished in his kirk, and thinketh it no wayes lawful to anie man to violate this order: yet that our Lord and Maiſter is not bound thereto, but may diſpoſe of the houſe of his father as he thinketh beſt, notwithſtanding of this order; if in caſe confuſion be entred in the place of order, that is, if the ordinarie vocation eſtablished by him ſelf in the perſonnes of the Apoſtles and their ſucceſſours, shal faile and ceaſe (which, as we haue proued before, can not be) for lacke of true paſtours; he may ſend extraordinarily and immediatly paſtours to guyd, rule, and gouerne his houſe and feed his flock. I wil wel it be ſo (for no man should or can deny that ſoueraine power to IESVS CHRIST, although it be brought in here vpō an abſurd ſuppoſition, if true paſtours ceaſe) prouyding there be no interruption in the gouernement of the kirk, that is, prouyding the kirk neuer want lauful paſtours neceſſarie for the edification of Chriſts myſtical body, which is but one, & can not ſuffer ſo euidene con-

conuulsion: for by diuision it must be two bodyes: which must be if the extraordinarie succeed not incontinent to the ordinarie, when he shall cease. For we haue shewed before that Christs kingdome must be perpetual: it must also be granted of necessity that the true kirk can no more want the lauful pastours, then she may want the trueth it self. For the true doctrine must be in the true doctours and pastours, or els it can not be had in this world. S. Paul ioyneth these two successions together, as things which can not be separated the one from the other, to wit, the word, of which commeth faith, and the pastour who is sent with charg to preach the word. *how shal they beleue in him of whom they haue not hard? and how shal they hear without a preacher? but how shal they preach vnles they be sent?* we may see the band and connection which S. Paul maketh here, the faith by hearing of the word proceeding from the preacher or pastour, who hath gotten lauful power being sent for that effect by him who might send him. The first, to wit faith, perteineth to the succession of doctrine which we ar obliged to beleue. The rest apperteineth to the succession of personnes: the faith commeth by hearing, which cannot be without speaking (I mean ordinarily) & speeking requireth a preacher, who can not be lauful without mission. wherfor as the kirk militant is perpetuall (for God neuer wanteth his kirk) so hath shee perpe- Rom. 10. 14.

tuallie true and lawful paſtours to gouerne hir; becauſe without them, there can be no kirk, ſeing that faith is required, which commeth by hearing, as is ſaid.

Let vs then ſpeak of this vocation, ſeing it is ſo neceſſarie that without it the charge can not be wel donne. I demand therefor who ſent the Miniſters to preach in the kirk of God? who hath geuen them that power vpon the Chriſtian people, to nourish the good & obedient by preaching, to punish and cut of the wicked & diſobedient by excommunication? I haue ſaid already (and it is true) that the law maketh vs al equal: the commiſſion or power maketh the difference, in geuing authority to ſome to command, others remaining within the compas of obedience to beleue & do as they ar taughte and cómanded.

*de notis Eccleſiæ & epiſt. Theolog. 5.*

This power and vocation, according to Bezais diſtinction, is ether ordinarie or extraordinarie. The ordinarie lauful (ſayeth he) conſiſteth in certain rules ordained by God, which ar three: to wit Examination and tryal of doctrine & maners: Election made by the kirk: And Impoſition of hands or ordination, Let vs apply theſe three rules to the vocation of Knox, Caluin, or Luther: for if it be not found lauful and iuſt in the firſt authour, in the reſt it can not be better; *Quod ab initio non valuit, tractu temporis conualeſcere non poteſt.* The longer that vſurpation leſteth, the worſe. Now to ſay that anie of them had their calling of the

Catho-

Catholique and Romaine kirk (as ſome doe ſay, when they ar preſſed to ſhew their holding) it is nothing to the purpoſe: for the Miniſters, to let the world vnderſtand that they will not ſerue them ſelues therewith, will haue al men refuſe and abiure al righte they may haue by the Pape and kirk of Rome: as may be ſeene in their confeſſion of faith. And Caluin with the reſt of the Miniſters of Geneua wold not ſuffer the Biſhopes of Troy and Neuers (who leuing the Catholik kirk fled to them) in any wayes to preach til they had abiured al power receaued before, and taken of new their commiſſion and authoritie of the Miniſters, becauſe in their opinion the former was not lauful. And in veritie the vocation cõming of the kirk of Rome can ſerue them to no purpoſe. For ether it was good or not: If it was good, doubtles they haue loſt it by their ſchiſme & rebellion, ſeing they haue left the kirk, of whome they had their vocation. The lyf can not be communicated nor extended to mẽbers ſeparated from the whol body. No man giueth power to be abandoned, nor to arme men and rebelles againſt him ſelf, nor to be caſt out of his owen place: Princes giue power to inferiour magiſtrates, but reteine euer ful power to them ſelues, to diſcharge or punish all rebellious perſonnes, whatſoeuer degree or preheminẽce they haue within the realme, the higher place the greater fal, & greuouſer paines to follow there vpon.

*tentes potenter tormenta patientur.* If it was not good it was nothinge of it ſelf, of no valour in the giuer, and ſo nothinge in the receauer. Of force they muſt think ſo, if they wil abyd at the firſt principel of their religion, to wit, that the Pape is the great Antichriſt: which ground if it were true (as it is moſt falſe) their vocatiō muſt needes be voide: for what commeth of Antichriſt (who ſhalbe as it were Satans eldeſt ſonne) muſt come of Sarā: as whatſoeuer commeth of IESVS CHRIST commeth of God, becauſe he is Gods eldeſt and onlie naturall Sonne. Wherfore hauing no ordinarie calling of the Catholik Romaine kirk, it followeth that they haue none at al. For if they had anie of the Catholik kirk (as in deed ſome of them had being prieſts) they loſt it by their ſchiſme, and can haue none from any other, but from them ſelues. And ſo I may ſay of him whoſoeuer ſhalbe firſt among them, that which Optatus Mileuitanus ſayeth of Victor firſt Bishope of the Donatiſtes: *Erat ibi filius ſine patre, tyro ſine Principe, diſcipulus ſine magiſtro, ſequens ſine antecedente, inquilinus ſine domo, hoſpes ſine hoſpitio, Paſtor ſine grege, Epiſcopus ſine populo.* Ther was there a ſoane without a father, a newe ſouldier without a commander or ruler, a diſciple without a maiſter, a follower without any to go before, a tenant without an houſe, an hoſte without a lodging, a paſtour without a flocke, a Biſhope without a people. For the three conditions required by Beza in a lawful paſtour and ordinarie

narie calling can not be found in any of them, if they be considered out of the Catholik Romaine kirk. Let vs take anie of them, whatsoeuer he be, and we shal see it to be so: For as to the examination and tryal of doctrine, who could examine him, seing he had no man aboue him, nor of higher power. And farther that proofe could not be made vpon the first, seing he was the finderout of the doctrine, he preached: wherfor as it was vnknowē to others, so they could not examine him there vpon. Sure I am that they wil not ascribe this examination to the people seing the people should be taughte and examined, not teach and examine: but of this shortlie at more length. As to their maners, I find not that anie of them were angels, nether any of thes who haue followed after them: I say no farther, I excuse not the faults & vyce of the cleargie; Iudas might loose the Apostleship, he could not defyle it, meekel lesse take it away or make it inutile in others.

The Second is the franck & free election of the personne examined, made with consent & knowledge of the kirk where he should exercise that charge and function. This can not be found in the first, and ring leaders of this new kirk: for what kirk could choose them, seing they were before their kirk: for they who liued in those dayes knew no sic doctrine, nor doctours; and so nether could examine the doctrine nor elect the personnes, whose

opinions were so new at that tyme, that they were not yet heard of.

But ye will say that their doctrine was most ancient of it self, although not knowen so publikly. I answer that it can not be ancient nor ould which continueth not frome the beginning; for that which dieth as soon as it is borne, meriteth not the name of ould age, *quod nascens moritur, senectutis nomen non meretur*. Ye may wel say it is long since it hath bene (if perchance it haue bene manie yeares before our age) but it is not long since it is: for being doeth include continuation of a thing, which they acknowledge not to be in their doctrine, at least publiklie and knowen to the world. But that which is confirmed with one simple word, may sufficientlie be refuted with an other: it was, it was not.

*Inst. lib. 4. cap. 14. sect. 20. & cap. 19. sect. 28. & 31.* *Calvin in the preface of his inst. and Bez. epist. Teolog. 3.*

The thrid qualitie to wit Imposition of hands (which Caluin acknowledgeth for a sacrament) shalbe lesse found in them: for who could consecrate or ordaine them pastours by imposition of hands, & geue them power to command and rule the kirk of God, seing they were the first them selues? There could be none before them, the ordinarie succession (as they alledge) being altogether perished and lost. Moreouer it is to be cõsidered that in our country the imposition of hands hath bene admitted within thes six yeares onlie, to wit, the year of God 1598. and that not without great difficultie and contention, and contrarie to the

to the opinion of ſundry of the miniſteries where I wold gladlie know of whom they receaued impoſition of hands, who that yeare begane to impoſe the hands on others. As to the foolish conceit of theſe that thinketh the commone people to haue that power, they ar more worthy of exemplare punition as trompetters of ſedition, ſubiecting al ſort of magiſtrats to à popular temerity and rage, then worthie of credit or anſwer as honeſt and reaſonable men. Out of thes factious ſhoppes aganiſt the authoritie of lauful Princes and their heritable right ar come *Francorum Gallia, Vindicia contra tyrannos*, the peſtilent pamphlet *De iure regni apud Scotos*, the firſt blaſt of the trõpette, & other ſic lyke vnhappie libelles verie cutthrottes of al Princes, that hath good and lauful right to any realme: becauſe ſic iuriſdictions ar, as it were, à ſtrang and mightie brydle to conteine within the compas of reaſon al ſeditious and ambitious ſpirits, of which our age (to our great griefe) hath bene ouer plentiful and aboundant, ſomtyme vnder one colour ſometyme vnder an other, lykwayes whehaue had aganiſt the Eccleſiaſtical order within theſe thouſand yeares, good ſtore of theſe buſie writters, and amongſt other we haue found ſome lytel touch in *aſſertionibus theologicis, aut verius, negationibus cacologicis eiuſdam Britannorum Scoti, qui incondita plebi ordinationem Eccleſiaſticam (licet in eo parum ſibi conſtet) committit.* The Miniſters (if I be not deceaued) wil

*aſſertione 2.*

wil not authorize theſe toyes, yea no more then Beza doeth approue Ramus dreames in religion. Wherefor I wil not enter farther therein, but wil retourn to theſe who ſo vnreuerentlie doeth traict their princes, as he doeth prelats. Thes men thé muſt ſuffer me to ſay that the ſubiect who wil haue no ſuperiour ſauing ſic as he finds good and to his guſt, or ſic as he may change when he liſt, ſhould feare to find the gibbet, to his ſuperiour or hell to his habitatiõ, no other place iuſtlie reſting for him who will not content him ſelf with his owen place, that is, which he is borne to, or which his Prince of his proper motiue auanceth him to. Shal the contentement or miſcontentement of the vnconſtant multitude, or of anie factious and ſeditious head, be à rule in ſo great and weghtie a matter? ſhall ſic foolish braines be the ſquare of al good and lawful gouernement? Theſe maximes ſet doune to allure the people, ar to deſtroy both the people and Princes, & commeth of them, who beyond their merite looketh for auancement to honours, to the which otherwayes they could nor attein; ſo while they aſpire thereto, they conſpire againſt their Prince and Maiſter. Certainelie as the inferiour magiſtrate is anſwerable to his Prince not to his inferiour, ſo the Prince is anſwerable to God, and not to his ſubiect. Otherwayes how often ſoeuer thes trompettes of ſedition ſhould blowe, we ſhould be as often in ſollicitude of

Prince

Prince and commone wealth, and in place of one pretended tyrante, we should haue ten thowſand, who iuſtlie might be called tyrantes. Theſe fyrbrands doe rail & cry out againſt the lawful Princes, to put in that place many tribunes of the people, in hope to haue their part, as others, who iniuſtlie ar entred therefor why may they not ſay with the naughtie woman, *nec mihi nec tibi, ſed diuidatur*, ſeing 3. Reg. 3. 26.
they haue no iuſt part therin? But the iuſt poſſeſſour cannot approue ſo pernicious a diuiſion. If we lacke examples of our owen, there might be found out ouermanie in other realmes. But by what right (I pray you) shal the ſeditious ſubiect (for no other wil vſurpe that place) be aboue his lawful Prince, to ſit as iudge on his eſtate, lyf, and honour? Who is amongſt vs that wold willinglie ſuffer to be commanded (what shal I ſay iudged?) by his owen ſeruant, by whome he were ignominiouſly accuſed? It is not lawful to the partie to ſit as iudge, nor to be witnes in a priuat mans cauſe: what shall it be then in Princes? We laugh & ieſt when we ſee anie priuat man that thinketh him ſelf monarche of the whol world, as being ſicke of a pleaſant imagination & phantaſie, without any mans hurt or dommage. But it is no ſport nor bourd to ſee the furious multitude medle it ſelf with the eſtate, lyf, and honour of their Prince, where many thouſands ar oppreſſed, vnder colour of the commone wealth and libertie, which doub-

tles

les ar loſt when they fall in the hands of the multitude. If the Prince wold force vs to do anie thing againſt God and good reaſon, we ſhould arme our ſelues with patience, and not with rebellion, that is we ſhould follow Gods command; and if the Prince wold be ſo rigourous as to punish vs therefore, we, after the example of the Apoſtles and primitiue kirk ſhould ſuffer it, and not to take armes againſt him: *In patientia veſtra poſſidebitis animas veſtras. In your patience you ſhall poſſeſſe your ſoules*, ſayeth our Lord. what good Chriſtian wold not rather chooſe to be for the trueth a martyr before God, then as a traitour for rebellion executed by men? we may without danger of conſcience ſuffer a wrong, but not do a wrong without danger of conſcience: It is but by M. Foxes new martyrologe that men become martyres for hereſie and rebellion. In the kirk that honour is giuen only to them, who dieth for the trueth (as in the primitiue kirk) without any ſpot of rebellion: *cauſa martyrem facit, non pœna.* I wil pas theſe opinions becauſe they require a more sharpe maner of refutation, ſeing they bring with them ſo many heapes of miſeries, if they be not ſpedelie ſmothered in the beginning. For to lay aſyd the commone and publik calamities, wherein no man can be in ſuretie, often tymes chooſing a new King, we looſe an ould kingdome. But to retourn to our purpos: This ordination of paſtours could not come of the people, becauſe at the

Luc. 21. 19.

begin-

beginning of this new religion al the people was Catholik, and knew no sic doctrine nor doctours, and so could not make them pastors who were first actors of this tragedie. Moreouer Beza in his epistles seemeth no wayes to approue this populare forme of gouernement in the kirk. Wherefore seing the first Minister nether had Examination, Election, nor Ordination, or Imposition of hands, it may be easelie concluded, that they had no lauful ordinarie calling, & so could nor giue any true vocation or calling to others, becauſe they had it not them selues. *Epistol. Theolog. 83.*

Let vs goe forward. The Catholik kirk (say they) hath loſt the ordinarie vocation, and they haue found the extraordinarie. We haue loſt one thing, and they haue found an other; it is mutuallie mett with our loſſe. But seeing they haue not found our goodes, we can pretend no right therto: So, as we pretend no right to their extraordinarie calling, they can pretend no tytill to our ordinarie, as is said.

They ar called and sent extraordinarily (say they) to gouerne the kirk of God: if their vocation be extraordinarie it passeth the bounds of the order Apoſtolik: For how can it be Apoſtolik without continuation since the Apoſtles, not hauing beginning nor authoritie of their vocation. If the race and succeſſion of the Apoſtles be loſt, why vaunt they them selues to follow the Apoſtles? at leaſt they

they follow them not in their vocation, and therefore: the tytils and euidents of the Apoſtles can ſerue them for nothing. They muſt ſhew their new holding, ſeing the ancient tytles ar expyred and rune out; if there reſteth no man hauing the right of the Apoſtles, the Miniſters can not haue it. We muſt ſee their new charters paſſed vnder the great ſeal of IESVS CHRIST, marcked with miracles, wroght by the holy-ſpirit: if they can ſhew anie ſic thing, it will put them out of trouble, and vs out of doubt, and take away al ſhadow of excuſe, which otherwayes we might iuſtlie pretend for our diſobedience.

But in good conſcience may we credit them, who with their ſimple word wold make vs beleue that the ancient ſucceſſion of the Apoſtles is perished? Shal I not think (if that be true) that the tribe of Leui was more deare to God, then the ſpiritual poſteritie of the Apoſtles, yea then the poſteritie of IESVS CHRIST him ſelf, out of whoſe ſeedes mouth, the veritie should neuer depart? Shal it ſerue for nothing that that vyniard was planted with our Maiſters owē hand, bought with is death, nurished by his Apoſtles, watred with their blood, and with the blood of ſo manie thowſand martyrs, keept by the aſſiſtance of the holie ſpirit, in the learned and Godlie fathers, and in their poſteritie? Shal the order of Aaron be ſo far preferred to the order of Melchiſedech? the body to the ſpirit,

Iſa. 59. 21.

the

the figure to the veritie, and man to God? Shal the ministers haue the honour to haue restored the kirk, which the holie spirit by his negligence had lost? their onlie hand hath holden our Lord in his right: Wel, geuing and not granting that our Maister had lost his inheritance in this world for a tyme through negligence of his officers, or rather by their malice and knauerie: he hath cast them out: he hath placed in their place and charge others, more worthie. Yet before I see their letters of commission, I wold gladlie know why they were geuen: for it could not be a light cause which moued God to geue a new charge. They wil say, perchance, to reforme the kirk, and take away the manifold abuses that were both in the doctrine and maners. A iust reason truelie and a charge worthie of eternal memorie and thankes, and most necessarie (if it be true) to be put in execution, for the publik good, salvation of many soules, and (which is the principal) for Gods glorie, and he to be praised and loued who doth his duety in the execution of the same: But with what sinceritie and Godlie dealing it hath bin fulfilled & accomplished, the miserable estate of our country may beare witnes: Where many haue learned the science of Adam and Eue in eating of the forbidden tree, knowing the good they haue lost & euill they haue found. And I feare that these new pastours haue vsed as litill discretion in gouerning mens soules, as policie in doune casting

the ma-

the materiall kirks.

*Intempestiuus sed supprime Musa querelas.*

Put the case that they were sent to reform the kirk in doctrine and maners. These heauenly phisitions then found à sick persone before them, but not a dead, to procure whose health they were sent. Why haue they rent this body in peaces, and made vp so many others, so different and contrarious euery one to an other, lyke the Cadmeian brethrin? These agree not with their letter patent, if they haue any: they should not haue passed the boundes of their legatiõ. If they were sent to reforme the kirk, according to my iudgement (I dare not be bold to pronunce anie farther for feare of offence) they should haue remained in the kirk (*fugiendo non curantur agri, sed medendo*) and by vertue of their commission taken away the causes of hir sicknes and deformitie: he who gaue them the charg wold haue giuen them the strength, *qui dat velle, dabit & perficere*: he wold not haue left them in so notable and good an enterprise; they could not haue lacked meanes nor wisdom hauing so mightie a maister. If they feared the plaugue or rather the iust punition, I excuse their flight, yet can not praise them, that they chose rather to seall their doctrine with other mens blood then with their owen. But to passe this extraordinarie flournes (which hath moued them to rent the kirk in peeces by so many sundrie sectes, rather then to suffer martyrdome them

selues

ſelues & ſo paſſe to heauen) why did they goe beſides their commiſſion? they diſcharged not them ſelues in making an other kirk. To make a kirk, and to reforme or heale a kirk, are diuers things. They muſt acknowledge a double fault which they haue committed, the one in not doing that which they were commanded, which was in reforming the kirk; the other in doing of that which they were not commanded, in building a kirk. If there was no kirk at all, when they came, their commiſſion was in vaine and ſerued for nothing: they ſhould haue retourned and taken an other, to make vp and build a kirk of new, and not to reforme that which was not: For reformation preſuppoſeth a ſubiect and matter lacking ſome thing neceſſarie to the perfection: ſo their procuration (if there was no kirk) was nothinge of it ſelf, and can nether ſerue them nor their ſucceſſours for anie warrand of this work they haue taken in hand, how beutiful & glorious a name ſoeuer they giue it.

*Obſcurant oculis ſuperi mortalia inſtar.*

Think ye it reaſonable, that any man ſhould take vpon him to caſt doune the houſe, which IESVS CHRIST him ſelfe hath builded, becauſe it ſemeth to his vaine imagination to haue many deformities and vncomlineſſes, & build vp an other at his fantaſie, alledging that the Lord hath ſent him? I can not beleue that any man can be a better painter or maiſ-

ſon then God, who ſaid *tota pulchra es amica mea, & macula non eſt in te*, and who builded his kirk vpon a rock. wel I know that it is Gods wil that his houſe ſtand to the end of the world. But let this be an errour of the Secretarie, who should haue written formation of a kirk; or the fault of the meſſenger, who ſpake ouer ſoftlie in our firſt commiſſioners eare, whereby one word was taken for an other. But whither it should be Formation, Reformation, or Deformation, for the preſent I ſtand not, prouyding the commiſſion of this extraordinarie calling be good. They were ſent (ſay they) by God extraordinarilie. I deſyre they proue that: for ſimple and proueles ſayings, in matters of ſo great conſequence (as where it is queſtion of eternal lyf & death) can not be receaued, except by them, who wold hazard their part of paradiſe on a ſimple word: we muſt ſee the commiſſion alledged, if it be good and haue the beſt and aſſured mark, that it may ſerue vs for our warrand, when we ſhalbe called to rendre compt of our rentes and dueties in commanding or obeying. It is as dangerous to beleue euery man, as to beleue no man. I ſee the Miniſters haue diſpoſeſſed thoſe, who were paſtours by iuſt ſucceſſion (as hauing receaued that charge from hand to hand ſince the Apoſtles) and haue placed them ſelues in their roome deſyring or rather commanding vs to acknowledge them as true paſtours, follow and obey them,

*Knox appellation* 2.

them, geuing our ſoules and conſcience to be nurished by them in trueth and pietie, of the which they haue the diſtribution delyuered to them by God him ſelf, as they alledge.

Truelie ſeing that no man, no not of their moſt zelous brethrin will giue them a thowſand pound on their word without good and ſufficient caution, ſhould we not be great fooles to giue them our ſoules not asking of them any ſufficient warrand. but their word? The matter is ſo weightie that they can not iuſtlie be offended with vs, if we deſyre to be aſſured that we may haue no loſſe in beleuing them. Let vs ſee the great Seall and mark of this extraordinarie calling, that is miracles and wonderfull works aboue nature, where by we may know that it is God who ſent them, and that it is his wil we receaue them with due reuerence and obedience. I know they wil anſwer me here, that they ar not obliged to bring miracles, ſeing they teach no new doctrin. I pray al good and Godlie Chriſtians conſider if this be a propre anſwer and to the purpoſe: For firſt they take that for a proofe, which is in controuerſie betwixt the parties, as is ouer euidentlie knowen: for we ſay (as we ſhalbe able to proue by them ſelues) that the doctrine they teach now is new, at the leaſt in many heades of controuerſies. Secondlie the prophetes, who brought miracles, brought no new doctrine, otherwayes they could not haue bin receaued,

the law being ſo formall againſt them? Thridlie it muſt be new to vs, ſeing that neither we, nor anie of our forefathers before Knox euer heard of it in our countrey. Laſt of all, we ſeek miracles for their alledged extraordinarie and marueilous calling, & not for their doctrine, which can not be true, ſeing it is ſo new, the veritie being ſo ould. Our Maiſter & Lord commandeth vs in matters of religion to obey his kirk: & to obey & acknowledge none other. Why ſhal we now heare the Miniſters without anie aſſurance of their charge and commiſſion, ether ordinarie or extraordinarie? If anie man wold aske of the ſubiectes of a noble man (who were out of the country) the rentes and dueties, alledging he had commiſſion of their maiſter: VVold they not iuſtlie anſwer, that their maiſter before his parting out of the country, had put order to all his affaires, giuing charge to certaine men whome he had choſen for that effect and made officers ouer his wholle lands with ful power to ſett and lett, take vp dueties and rentes, giue quittances, ſett and hould courtes, and al other things neceſſarie, with expreſſe commād to acknowledge none other till his retourning: wherefore if he had any commiſſion from their maiſter, it behoued to be communicat and ſeene, yea aſſuredlie knowen to be auailable & ſufficient? Certainlie it wold not ſerue nor moue them (if they were well aduyſed) to ſay that theis things, which he re-

he requireth were due & owing to their maiſter and that he asketh no thing, to which they were not obliged: Nor yet to ſay that the officers had neglected their duetie both in waſting their maiſters goods and miſgouerning his houſe, and alſo in oppreſſing his ſubiectes, wold they not anſwer, that they were ſorie for ſic mens misbehauiour, yet becauſe their maiſter had geuen them charge to obey onlie theis officers whome he had eſtablished, they could not paſſe the bounds of their maiſters command; and therfor wold in no way acknowledge him, who sheweth no commiſſion, nor power of their maiſter? Shall poore men be more wiſe & circunſpect in a quarter of meal or 40. shillings, then I in my ſoule? Shal they ſeek for good warrand in paying of their duecties, and shal I giue my ſoule to the firſt that craueth it? It shall not be needfull to tel me here, what I owe to my maiſter, what I should beleue, what reuerence I should beare to the ſcriptures and paſtoures of the kirk. I beleue that more is true, then anie man can tell: I aske onlie wherefro commeth theis extraordinarie officers, and what power they haue? I wold pray them to cleare me of this ſubiect. For in matters of faith, the authoritie maketh all, which can receaue none other warrand, but God him ſelf, or elſe ſic as ar ſufficiētly authorized by him. They wil ſay that ſundrie of the prophetes came without miracles, and therefor it can not be iuſtly asked of them, which

hath not bin asked of others before them, comming with lyk calling. I answer, that a great part of the Prophetes brought miracles with them to confirme their sending, & principally, when their vocation was, or might be called in doubt. wherefor Moses shewed miracles not onlie in the beginning, when he was first receaued, but also against Core Dathan and Abiron. Elias against the prophetes of Baal in burning the sacrifice vpon the Alter before the people. And to passe vnder silence al other, IESVS CHRIST acknowledgeth miracles to be necessarie. *If I* (sayeth he)
Io.15.24. *had not come and donne workes amongest them, that no other man hath donne, they had not had sinne. But now they both haue sinne, and haue hated both me and my father.* To Sainct Iohn the Baptist asking by two of his disciples, if it was he who was
Matt. 11. 5. to come, he answereth, *the blind see, the crippel walk, the lepers ar made cleane, the de-fe heare, the*
Luc.7.19. *dead ryse againe, to the poore the Euangelle is preached.* Moreouer the prophetes, who were sent extraordinarilie neuer intermedled them selues with the office of preesthood and pastours (except they were of the Tribe of Leui) nor euer put them out of their place. We neuer heard that any, because he was sent extraordinarilie, took the place of the high preest: or took the Ephod, or censure out of the preests hands: For the sacrifice was euer continued by the preestes and by none other. So that the ancient prophetes howsoeuer they were

were called extraordinarilie (as is saide) did neuer pretend thereby any charge in the sacrifice as appertening to the priestes only. For the prophetes came as a new succour & helpe sent by God to fortifie and comfort the ordinarie officers, to waken them vp from negligence, to aduertise them of their duetie, to loue honour and serue their God vprightlie. Lykewise to admonish the Prince and people of their office, reproue them of their faultes and sinnes, with threatnings of punition and vengance there vpon to follow, except they did preuent the wrath of God with speedy repentance. In which charges miracles were not verie necessarie, seing they demanded but amendement of mens lyues, and Godes service to be donne, by sic as had the charge, not medling there with, notwithstanding of their extraordinarie sending by God him self. Euen as if a Prince or noble mā abser, wold giue charge to anie man by mouth, to aduertise his seruantes and subiectes to be more diligent in their office and duetie, shewing them wherein their maister were offended, and what punition he had deliberate to take of sic as he soūd culpable and giltie; it should not be necessarie therefore to bring his maisters great sealle. But if he wold enter to gouerne and rule, he wold not be receaued vpon his simple word. Moreuer, although there be no mention in the scriptures of the miracles of sundrie Prophetes, yet it is not to be concluded that they did

no miracles: yea their prophecies were sufficient warrands for their mission, they being, as it were, the ordinarie postes & messengers in those dayes betwixt God and his people, to whom Gods will was to be shewen according to the peoples behauiour and new occurrantes. It can not be shewen where that anie prophete is come to execute anie great enterprise without miracles, ether presente, precedent, or subsequent. In S. Iohn the Baptist there be manie things verie miraculous, his mothers age, his fathers dumnes before his conception, and speach restored at his birth, his education commanded by the angel, his lyf; and last of all the testimonie of IESVS CHRIST more then all miracles, seing he was the authour of all miracles, which at that tyme for iust reason he had kepte to him self: whereby he might be knowen from others. Now there came neuer anie prophete for so weightie a matter as this, for which, they say, that they ar come, to wit, to restore the spouse to IESVS CHRIST, the body to the head, to make a new flock to that heauenlie Pastour, to restore him to his ould & ancient heritage, to build vp the eternal house of God, to destroy the reigne of Satan: to bring new light to the world, to take mankynd out of the thraot, as it were, of the deuill: to publish the verity so long vnknowen: to shew the kirk so long vnseene and inuisible. And to be short, to do that wherefore our Maister

and

and Lord of his infinite goodnes came in to earth, and took vpon him our mortall nature, and therein ſuffered death and paſſion, that is, to make vs immortals, and of ſonnes of man, which we were, to make vs ſonnes of God, to be partakers with him of the eternal inheritance, hauing nurished and brought vs vp in his owen houſe: the which to gouerne if Luther, Caluin, or Knox pretendes any right by new extraordinarie charge, is it not moſt reaſonable that they shew an authentique commiſſion? Should not the great ſealle be here imployed? Elias for leſſe cauſe made the fyre come out of heauen. If a ſimple alledgeance of reformation be a ſufficient warrand, we shall haue incontinent good ſtore of reformers and extraordinarie paſtours to correct, or rather to corrupt, the whole world. The Anabaptiſtes and Libertines with manie other ſiclyke pernicious peſtes should shortlie occupie all places: For their word is as good as the other is, in matters of religion, if the word be inough, and the ſaying a ſufficient proofe. But if there be anie other thing requiſite to haue and procure credit, whatsoeuer is neceſſarie in one, is neceſſarie in all, ſeing there can be no authoritie and power but in the ordinaries becauſe it onlie was ſufficientlie authorized by IESVS CHRIST, and executed by his Apoſtles (who receaued it immediatlie of their Maiſter) and by their ſucceſſors to our dayes. Otherwayes the extraordi-

traordinarie muſt haue as good and ſolid prooſe as the ordinarie. If it be ſufficient to ſay that is was Gods will and pleaſure, that ſic men should take that worke of gouernement and reformation in hand: when they cote the place, we shal ether anſwer, or agree thereto. But IESVS CHRIST will diſauow ſick extraordinarie reformers. *The Prophetes lyes in my name. I haue not ſent them, neither did I command them: nether ſpake I vnto them: but they prophecie vnto you a fals viſion and diuination and vanitie and deceatfulnes of their owne hart.* Let them shew (if they haue anie charge) the expreſſe and particular command they haue of God to come: for the general and ancient commandement without doubt apperteineth to the ordinarie officers of the houſe, whoſe commiſſion is of long tyme both confirmed and acknowledged: Noueltie should be ſuſpect of al men ſeing, as is ſaid, the veritie is ſo ould.

Ierem. 14. 14.

Some anſwere that it is a great miracle and ſufficient to proue Gods wil and pleature, that in ſo short a tyme they haue drawen ſo manie to them from the kirk of Rome If that were a ſufficient reaſon and great miracle; then should Mahomet and Arius be holie men ſent by God, and his welbeloued; for certaine it is that the impietie of Mahomet, or hereſie of Arius was more mightie then al thoſe who haue ſeperated them ſelues in theſe late dayes from the Catholique Romaine kirk: yet I am

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assured that no man of iudgement wil thinke that Mahomet, or Arius did miracles by their seduction, or that sic reuolts were sufficient to proue them to be sent by God with new commission. Therefore although Luther, Caluin, Knox and their successours had brangled the whole world (as they haue not done, and the Antechrist wil do) with their authoritie and doctrine, it followeth not that it is a work approued by God & his extraordinarie sending: For albeit it be contrarie to al ordinarie course, it should not be concluded, that it is good and procedeth from a power extraordinarie geuen by God: For we see manie extraordinarie actions, and punished extraordinarelie, as things donne with violence and contrarie to all order. I can not beleue that the Ministers them selues wold now receaue any man, who wold come with an extraordinarie calling to reforme them, notwithstand of their short possession: wherein there be manie thinges thought (euen by some of them selues) worthie of a good reformation. I doubt not but they wold alledge their order alredie receaued, confirmed and established, And in case he wold not desist, I am assured, they wold imploy the force of their excommunication and actes of parliament, as a soueraine remedie against al rebellious personnes. If it was lawful to a few vnquyet spirites to tyse against the whole Catholique kirk being in possession 1500. yeares established, why

why shal it not be laufull to ryse against a few new incomes? might it not be iustlie said here *Patere legem quam ipse tulerit*? The iurisconsult sayeth well, *quod quisque iuris in alterum statuit, ipse eodem iure vti debet.* Shall it be permitted to them to do what they lift, against whome they please, in what maner & matter they will, and shal be lauful to no man to gainsay them. *O duram aliorum sortem ne dicam seruitutem.* They wil alledge perchance the scriptures for their warrād & that they teach the veritie conteined therein. I answer, that euerie heretik sayeth the like, and that al our dispute, for the present, is of their power and calling: and that it is an other debate betwixt vs and them touching the scriptures and veritie, as we haue said before. We grant the scriptures and the veritie should be receaued and imbraced, and all good reason doth teach vs that there should be pastoures; but they giue no assurance yea no appeerance that Luther, Caluin, or Knox, or anie of their successours, can be these true pastours, but rather the contrarie, as we haue proued. Wold they then thus argument? I haue the bible, I say the trueth, I am then a true lauful pastour and doctour of Godes kirk? I vnderstand not this consequent, except they wold say that all (be they men, wemen, or children, learned or ignorant) who hath the bible and sayeth the verity ar true and lauful pastours, that is, haue lauful power and authoritie in the kirk

Kirk of of God to preache, teache, and administer the ſacramentes, bind and looſe, take in and put out, excommunicate and abſolue, which I am aſſured, they wil not ſay. What wold be thought of me, if I ſhould argument thus? I haue the actes of parliament, I ſay no thing but according to the Kinges Maieſtie lawes and ordinances, therefor I am a ſhiref or lieutenant for his Maieſtie: that is, I haue power to adminiſter iuſtice, condemne and abſolue, head and hang, bamish and cal back &c. perchance this vaine imagination wold be tolerat and laughen at in me, as oftentymes ſic phrenetik ſpirites ſerueth for other mens recreation: but if there vpon I ſhould take anie man who had committed a murther and (keeping the ordinarie forme of iuſtice in all other things, except in the power which I had not) ſhould call in 15. or 20. honeſt men on his Aſſiſes, & by them, for the ſlaughter well verified, & confeſſed, cõdemne him in the mouth of the doome-giuer, & execute him by the hangman, wold it be a ſufficient warrand for me to shew the actes of parliament or lawes of the country & perpetuall practiſe in lyke thinges? It wold not be asked of me what the law ordaineth, but what power and authoritie I had to take that man, call in a Syes on him, condemne and execute him: my commiſſion wold be ſought, and not the law. Yea for lack of a lawful commiſſion I ſhould be found not onlie a manſlayer with

with Syes, Doome-giuer & Hangmã (whom I had drawen in that cryme with me) but also an vsurper of the Kinges authoritie, without his knowledge or wil, so I and all my adherentes should be found in that action more giltie, and to haue offended the Prince more greuouslie then the murtherer, whome I had executed: For beſyde the slaughter, in my action should be found vsurpation, oppreſſion and coniunction of ſo manie perſones therin, which should augment my cryme: For as in good thinges the more the better, ſo in euil thinges the more the worſe. Lykwiſe we aske not of the miniſters, if ther should be any lawful paſtoures who should preach, teach, adminiſter the ſacramentes, exhort to vertue, reproue vyce, cut off rotten and rebellious members: We know theis things may and should be donne by them who haue the lawful power: But we demand who gaue them that power to exerciſe theis charges & offices to enioye that priuiledge? Shal not the vſurper here be in greater dãger, as the matter is greater? Or shal Kinges and Princes, nobles & gentilmen, commoune wealthes and burgiſes, priuat and ſimple men haue order and diſcipline, wereby ſome command and others obey without confuſion, and God shal haue none in his houſe? In the kirk shalbe no thing, but diſorder trouble and diſcorder that it may be ſaid of hir, which the poëte ſayeth of the ſea waues.

*Nescit tui domino parcat unda maris.*

If euerie man wil command (which muſt be if the bible may make a paſtour) who shal not command? only they ſurely who wanteth ether meanes or wil to haue a bible. It is permitted to euerie man to shew the law and trueth to any man: Yea it is a work of charity, to teach the ignorant, pincipally in matters of ſaluation: but to take on him the power & iuriſdiction to command aboue others as being à paſtour or magiſtrate, not hauing charg of them, who hath that power, *nunquam licuit, nunquámque licebit*. It was not, is not, nor euer shalbe lauful. The kirk is as *Caſtrorum acies ordinata*: Not lyke to the *Chaos* of poëtes where.

*Frigida pugnabant calidis, humentia ſiccis,*
*Mollia cum duris, ſine pondere habentia pondus.*

Sic confuſions agrees not with Gods infinite wiſdome, *qua attingit à fine uſque ad finem fortiter, & diſponit omnia ſuauiter*. The qualities that S. Paul requireth in a Bishope, sheweth how careful God is to haue his houſe well gouerned. Men wil not ſuffer euerie man to medle with the keeping of their beaſtes, & I think not that God hath leſſe regard to his kirk. It may be that they ſay that there was no paſtours in the kirk, when theis new Euangeliſtes came, ſeing they who were in poſſeſſion had loſt their right, becauſe they had not donne their duetie: and therefor the miniſters *quaſi in uacuum uenerunt*, did occupie a place vacant. Although it be

it be a thing verie hard to be beleeued, yea altogether not to be beleeued, that God contrarie to his promise hath so abandoned his owen inhetitance, that he hath no man, who with lauful authority did his duetie, or might giue power to others to gouerne our Sauiors house, yet I wil passe it at this tyme. I take onlie that pastoures hath not lost their place by reason of non entry, in which case it behoueth them to haue recourse to their maister, all retourning back againe to him. If they haue negligentlie and vnproperlie donne their office, as the cryme was personal, so should the paine and punition be personal: seing in felonies the heires or successours be not pursued for the cryme of their predecessours, except they be found *socij criminis*, or else that their predecessours haue committed lesmaiestie. Now seing the successour is nowayes debarred for commoune cryme committed by his predecessours: it resteth the cryme must be of lesmaiestie, by rebellion or treason against the Princes personne or estate, counsel taken with the enimie, aspyring to the croune, or other sic poinctes as theis. Now giuing & not grãting (for the Ministers can neuer be able to proue sic thinges, as we haue shewen before) that the pastoures of the Catholique kirk haue lost their place by one of theis crymes: what syn? Followeth it that the ministers haue the iust title? *Quo iure?* By publique authoritie and forme of iustice the charge, power, and office

of pas

of pastours was geuen to the Apostles and their successors til the worlds end. Yet if they haue failled so greeuouslie, that God hath called back the gift made to his onlie sonne, let them be accused, examined, iudged, and condemned by publique authoritie and forme of iustice, and so discharged, dispossessed and cast out, as men otherlie conuict and adiudged to forfeit: and let others by lyk forme and authoritie be put in their place, by them who hath the power thereto. The offence maketh men worthie of condemnation, but condemneth no man. The sentence and decree of the iudge must first be pronounced. Manie men committe great crymes, yet possesse their lands til they be forfaulted: and sundry getteth their remission before they be accused: and others, notwithstanding they be iustlie accused of treason, yet because they ar not condemned and forfault, without anie remission they stand stil in possession & their heires after them.

Seing the Kinges authoritie and publique forme of iustice ar required to put anie man in iust possession of his owne, shal it be permitted to euery man at his phantasy to cast him out, who is in possession? And when the act of forfaultrie is passed and giuen out in due forme, the landes or offices ar not abandoned to euery one, who wil occupie them: but they returne to the Prince or ouerlord. So whosoeuer will iustlie possesse and enioye

theis lands or offices, muſt haue a new gift of the Prince or ouerlord, new charters, euidences, infeftments, commiſſions well made, ſubſcribed, and ſealed, with all other circumſtances (better knowen to men of law nor to me) which ar neceſſarie; whereby he may be knowen to be the iuſte poſſeſſour or lawful magiſtrate: for the charters, euidences, infeftments, commiſſions or liuerie, or anie other tytles which were before, ar anulled, as apperteining only to the perſone forfault, and therefor inutile for al other men, except perchance to his heires, if the Prince wold haue pittie of them: or if he wold ſuffer the forfaultrie to be reduced of ſpecial grace and fauour. Whoſoeuer wold ſtart to at his owen hand, and occupie the place vacant without conſent of the ſuperiour, might thinke aſſuredlie that his vſurpation wold be as heauie a cryme as the others was, who had loſt the place.

Lykwiſe (as ſaid is) if the paſtors haue failled, let them be accuſed before their lawful iudge: where they ar found giltie, let them be condemned: thereafter ſic as shalbe found mote qualified, and worthie of ſic offices may be choſen in their place and obtein a new commiſſion of them, who hath that power in the kirk vpon earth. If ther be none at al, who hath iuriſdiction, they muſt take new holding of God in the ſame forme and maner as the Apoſtles receaued it from Ieſus Chriſt, the

the posteritie and successors hauing failled, as they alledge, but not proue. Now what forme of iustice hath bene keept? Who warned the pastoures? Before what iudge were they accused? Who condemned them? who gaue the new title to the Ministers? I see the lawful pastores accused, or rather abused, with out law, or reason, or iudge: condemned without any forme of iustice; cast out with violence, and their places occupied by others, without, yea against al right. I see their contrarie partie make him self iudge, take a commission of him self, and put it in execution on his priuat authoritie.

*--- Dicne hunc ardori mentibus addunt Eurydicen?*
*An sua cuique Deus fit dira cupido?*

If al things must be made new before they haue good right, it were best they made a new God to authoriz their new procedinges and practise of law: for if theis fashions were good and reasonable, who could be assured, I say not of his goodes office or landes, but euen of his verie lyf, euery man making him self partie, witnes, iudge, and executour of anie accusation he should forge against anie man it pleaseth him? I might insist here with manie other reasons, if I feared not to be tedious in urging a matter so cleare of it self.

I know some, for defence of the Ministers, sayeth that their vocation is nether altogether ordinarie, nor altogether extraordinarie, *partem capiens ab utroque*, that is (when al is

well considered) nether the one nor the other. There is no moungrill religions, as ther is halflang dogges. They wold serue them selues with the authoritie of the Catholik kirk to enter in Gods house with order, and afterward without order, which they call extraordinarilie, guyde, or rather misguyde all at their phantasie.

But is it possible that they wil serue them with the kirk of Rome, seing they haue taken for a ground of their religion and lawful cause of their separation, that the Pape is the great Antechrist? They must on force laying this ground, acknowledge that they haue their entry in the kirk frome the Antechrist. Truelie if they haue no better porter then Satans eldest sonne to let them in, I fear they shal not be wealcome to God, who vseth in his merciful workes to imploy better seruantes. If that opinion were true, then should Satan be halfe maister, seing that the half of the charge commeth of him: yea he must haue (according to that doctrine) the most apparant part, seing that the ordinarie, which is well authorized commeth of him: where as the extraordinarie, which they wold ascribe to God, commeth without anie a vow, except of their bare saying. I wold be more ample in the refutation of this branded vocation, if I thought not that few, or none wold clayme thereto.

As to them, who serue them selues with the

the wordes of our Lord, *where there be two or three assembled in my name, there I am in the middest of them.* I answer shortlie, first, that it is question there, of the assistance of our Lord to the prelates of the kirk or people, and not of the calling of pastoures in particular. And who doubteth but holie and Godlie men hath the assistance of God whither they be in smal or great nomber. Nixt, if that should be taken generallie and for the vocation, wheresoeuer there be two or three gathered in Christes name there must be there power to make a pastour. So where there be two or three in anie house they must constitute a pastour to them self, and so change al priuat houses in kirkes, contrarie to that, which we see now in Scotland where kirkes ar turned in priuat houses. Moreuer if that were the sense of Christes wordes, it should apperteine to the people to cal the pastours, which the Ministers of Scotland verie wyslie, as yet haue neuer approued. And last of al, this could make no thing for the first Minister, who being alone could not be elected by two or three. Matth. 18. 20.

Notwithstanding of al this, I will giue and suppose in this matter as far as I can without preiudice of the veritie. I wil so enter for the present to receaue the extraordinarie vocation (which with reason can not be receaued, except it haue a verie good warrand) if it can serue vs to anie vse as I fear it can not do: For if so many hondreth yeares vnion of the Ca-

tholik doctrine can not ſerue to maintaine vs in our ordinarie right, how shal ſo many hundred daylie confuſions iuſtlie maintaine them in their extraordinarie vſurpation? But to what vſe can their extraordinarie calling ſerue vs although we wold receaue it? There be more then a hundred diuerſe religions (at leaſt opinions vſurping the name of religion) euerie one condemning one an other, and aſcribing to it ſelf that glorious title of true extraordinarie calling vnder pretence of the pure and true word of God, and adminiſtration of the ſacramentes. What shal I do in this great confuſed multitude, where none can ſtand ſure, except al his compagnions be declared vſurpers and fals propheteſ? Ye wil ſay perchance that the Miniſters of Scotland haue none of theſe ſectes amongs them, where of they ar verie glad. I wil not for the preſent conteſt there vpon. But ſure I am, that they who haue not the Miniſters of Scotlands religion amongſt them, ar as glad, and ſundrie, who haue it, wold be glad to be quyt therof. I may truelie ſay with an ancient authour ſpeaking of the philoſophers of his tyme, that all theis ſectes may be falſe, but ſure I am there can be but one true. If al can not be true, whome shall I credit? whome shall I follow? I can not credit nor follow them all, ſeing they ar contrarie, euery one condemning an other. The choiſe muſt be difficil, ſeeinge that euerie one ſayeth ſtoutlie that he hath the trueth.

Euerie

Euerie man pretendeth the verity, citeth the ſcriptures, confereth place with place, confirmeth his owen opinion (if ye wil beleeue him) ſolidlie & refuteth al others ſufficientlie. But if ye wil credit all the reſt, he ſayeth nothing to the prupoſe, except ſo far as he agreeth with euery one of them in particular.

So who ſoeuer wil agree with any of them, muſt of force diſagree with manie. And yet there can be but one trueth: and if we wil beleue the greateſt parte of them, none of of them hath the trueth: becauſe for one who affirmeth he hath the trueth, there be an hondred who gainſayeth him. For euery one of them alledgeth that al the reſt goeth wrong, which is verie eaſie to be beleued, becauſe the Catholique kirk ſayeth the ſame of them all, shee being, when they were not to ſay the lyk of hir. And how can any man of iudgement think other ways of them? VVe ſee the ſcripture taken by them al for an ordinarie proofe of their extraordinarie calling; it ſpeaketh (as they ſay) in al their fauoures. Yet can we not be of ſo manie religions: nor acknowledge or obey ſo many paſtours of ſo extraordinarie and contrary opinions. But ye wil ſay that he ſhould be receaued, followed and obeyed, who agreeth beſt with the ſcriptures. That is moſt reaſonable, if it can be knowen. But whoſe iudgement ſhalbe taken in the matter? None wil heare the Catholique kirk, becauſe they haue left hir: and ſo as rebellious ſubie-

ctes can abyd nothing but iuſt condemnation of their ſchiſme and errour. If we wil credit the parties, euerie man interpretes the ſcriptures beſt. The crowe thinketh hir owen bird faireſt: & vaine men eſteeme moſt of the birth of their owen braine. So ſhal I be in lyk paine and difficultie, as before, not knowing whome to flee. If they ſay that I muſt read the ſcripturs and follow thoſe who ſtandeth beſt by the veritie conteined therein. What? Muſt I be a profound theologue before I know my paſtoures? Muſt I be ſo deeplie learned before I knowe my maiſters ſchool? ſhall I be iudge extraordinarie to this extraordinarie calling? Muſt I read al theſe who haue written, before I enter in Gods houſe or acknowledge anie of his officers, for *Qui ſtatuit aliquid parte inaudita altera, æquum licet ſtatuerit, haud æqui fuit*? Muſt I be ſouueraine magiſtrate in this matter to giue out the final decree? Muſt I be the interpreter of our maiſter and Lords teſtament? Shall my foolish braine be a ſquare of his veritie? Finelie if I ſhould ſtand to that which I think beſt, I muſt be iudge: and if my iudgement be a rule to me to atteine the veritie, and conſequentlie eternal lyf, al men ſhould follow my iudgement: For there can be but one rule ſeing ther is but one veritie, except we wold think that the trueth ſhould be bowed to euery mans fantaſie; which we ſee now is done thorough out al Europe where ſouer this extraordinarie calling hath anie credit, which

hath

hath brought in this multitude of ſectes: For the iudgement being referred to the particular (who for that cauſe is ſent to the bible, which he muſt haue to conſult with all, as if he were ſome profound doctour in Iſraël) according as he ſhal find by his iudgement, he pronounceth the ſentence of true and lauful extraordinarie calling in fauour of his Miniſter. According to this forme, in Scotland the Miniſters following the doctrine of Sir Iohn Knox, or frere Iohn Craig ar thought to haue a good calling. In England the Brouniſtes, Puritaines, and family of Loue, or any hid new inuented fantaſy, thinketh their paſtors truely called. In France Caluin and Beza whits their adherentes ar thought to haue a lauful vocation amongeſt the greateſt part of our ſimple Proteſtants, except perchance Monſieur du Pleſſis haue drawen anie to a more recent imagination. I ſay the ſimple proteſtants, for they who haue any good opinion of them ſelues, taketh to them ſelf the free will which they refuſe to others

——— *nullius iurant in verba magiſtri,*

they receaue no thing, but that which agreeth with the ſcriptures, that is, with their iudgement and opinion, wher theſe new holy fathers at oftyms reiected by vertue of their owen rule, that is of euery priuat mans opinion.

In Almanie there be good ſtore of theis new extraordinarie called men. The freedome of the

of the townes maketh manie free vocations: For there they haue liberty to think, say, and follow what euerie man pleaseth. There is no acte of parliament to keep their vnion, nor force them to an accorde, which can not be had by anie other way amongest them, who wil haue the holy spirit speaking no farther then he whispereth in their care. True it is that where there is a Prince who commandeth, the people must change their religion with their maister: As long as their maister is Lutherian, they must say with him: if he changeth opinion or dieth, they must be reddie to receaue some other faith. This hath bene sundrie tymes experimented in that contrye. But in free townes as euerie man hath receaued of his Ministers preaching, he iudgeth the scriptures to say the same, where our commone prouerbe may iustly be imployed: as the fool thinketh, the bel clinketh. If there were publick place in Scotland for Ministers of other sectes, I doubt not but they wold auance their cause also. For that licence giuen to euerie man to be iudge on the scriptures, without anie acte of parliament to tye them to a certaine confession of faith (which in Almanie hath made this multitude of extraordinarie vocations) wold do the lyke amongest vs. How miserable is the estate of Almanie in that diuersitie of religions, if not openlie at least priuatlie, I think euery man knoweth, who hath bene there. It is most certaine that in

sundry

ſundry townes there be publicklie profeſſed ten, twelue, yea twentie, or twentie two ſundry faithes, euerie one deteſting an other. As to the priuat opinions, I had an euident experience my ſelfe in our vovage of Italie, retourning to France through Almanie the yeare of God 1600. in the moneth of December. For being in Ausburgh (where publike exercice is granted onlie to Catholiques and Lutherians) we were at the table a good number (I think aboue 12) of honeſt lyke men of diuerſe nations, but meakle more diuerſe of religions, where one of the company more zelous then the reſt (as it appeared) taking occaſion of our being at the Iubilee, did aske ſundry curious queſtions there about. A Frenche gentilman, who was come frome Rome with vs, picked with the matter, merilie, and yet courteouſlie, did pray the companie, if it might be without their offence to grant him a requeſt, which being accorded, he should anſwer to their queſtions according to his knowledg, if he found it agreable to them: this being propounded ſo diſcreatly and honeſtly (as that nation can do it verie well) it was not onlie accepted and granted of all the companie, but alſo made a great ſilence throughout all the table, euerie man being deſirous to know his requeſt.

Then hauing thanked them all, I am deſirous (ſayeth he) to know what profeſſion of religion now adayes, euery one of yow doeth

moſt

moſt approue, or what man ye think moſt worthie of credit when it is queſtion of anie head of religion called in controuerſie. And that no man may think I deſyr of others which I wold not do my ſelf, I wil ſpeak for my compagnions & me (meaning of vs three) we approue aboue all others the Catholik Apoſtolik Romaine religiō, & eſteeme the reſolutions geuen by the ſea Apoſtolik in Rome, pronounced by the Pape, to be preferred to all other, becauſe we find ſo manie ſolemne promiſſes made by God to S. Peters ſucceſſors. As I pray the companie not to be offended at my demand and iudgement, ſo I promiſe not to take in euil part when it ſhal pleaſe anie of you ether to aske at me any queſtion, or freely to pronunce what he meaneth.

Skarſlie had he ended his purpoſe when an other (who was a citizen of the towne) anſwered, that doubtles the true religion was conteined in the confeſſion of Auſburghe, and that Luther had bene one of the moſt notable men of our age in all his reſolutions, prouyding he be taken as he ſhould be, becauſe as an other Elias he came to inſtruct the world in theſe latter dayes. The towne (as it appeared) gaue him courage to ſpeak ſo far to the praiſe of Luther, and made him tell his opinion ſo freelie.

His neighbour (ſo farre as we could conlecture of his countenance) approued not his iudgement altogether, which, being required

he did

he did shew by his words, saying that he acknowledgeth Luther for a verie notable man, yet who had not seene al, which was necessarie for the reformation of the kirk of God, and cheeflie touching the Lords supper. His reformed supper made vs beleeue he was ether a Zuinglian or Caluinist. The Lutheran wold haue entred in defence of his maister, but being requested by the companie, desisted, although with difficultie.

Nixt to him was sitting a certaine man verie modestlie clad, who made a great outward shew of simplicitie of mynd, he with a lowe voice sayeth thus: I think no man should acknowledge anie religion but that, which commeth immediatlie of the holie spirit, who only can be receaued as a true master in that matter, *vnus est magister vester; & beatus homo quem tu erudieris Domine.* His answer shewed him to be of the Suentfeldien sect, who wil heare nothing but that, which their priuat spirit doeth teach them, hauing euer in their mouth, *audiam quid loquatur in me Dominus Deus.* *Psal. 93. 12.* *Psal. 84. 8.*

He who was ioyning with him, sayed with a laughing visage, that he had neuer beene so curious, as to examen al other mens religions or deuotion, but was accustomed to take thinges as he found them, leauing euerie man at his freedome, thinking it very reasonable that euerie man should haue the priuiledge which God had geuen him. It was not

difficill to coniecture that he was one of the Libertins, who in matters of religion thinketh it lawful to contrefait and dissemble al thinges and beleeue, what they list, or rather beleeue nothing at all.

Heer we had some lytill silence, because he, who nixt followeth made difficultie to tell his opinion, which neuer the lesse he did vtter, saying he did no wayes approue discorde amonges Christians, seing our Lord & his Apostles had geuen vs so notable examples of vnion in making al thinges commone, which were propre and priuat before, which might easelie be put in vse againe, if men wold take away *meum* and *tuum*, myne, and thyne. We vnderstood by his words that he was an Adamit, who amonges other detestable errours, thinke that wemen should be commone as well as other thinges. The whole rest of the companie, as it appeared, did abhorre frome that opinion. Yet one sayed; at least seing it was lauful to the people of God in ould tymes to haue manie wifes, why shal it now be forbidden? The Lutherian who spak first, hauing answered that sic lawes were neuer in practise amonges the Christians, because they were improued by IESVS CHRIST. Yet your Luther (sayeth he) made no difficultie to preach, *si non vult vxor, veniat ancilla*. This answer made the companie to laugh, and remembred vs that some of our contry men, had good store of wyues by a new forme of deuot-

deuorcinge, the partie taking the cryme one him, in hope to haue a new wyfe shortlie after.

He that was nixt wold gladlie(as it seemed) haue holden his peace, yet for feare we should take worse opinion of him, hyding his pernicious errour the best he could, said that it had pleased God in our dayes to shew the light of his verity in Pole, Lithuania, & Transsyluania, although other nations had not as yet, receaued it. These words gaue vs to vnderstand that he was one of the new Arrians whose errours were brought in by Gregorius Pauli Minister of Cracouia, Valentinus Gentilis, Seruetus (who was burnt at Geneua by Caluins pursuite) and some others of lyk stoffe, whose doctrine is ful of blasphemies.

The nixt following with a litill smylling, sayed, that he meruelled not of so many diuerse opinions which were entred in the world, seing that men seeketh rather subtil interpretations, then the veritie. As for my part(sayed he) I bear my warrand about with me (shewing vs his Bible he had in his bosome) which is most easie to be vnderstood of it self, and therefor onlie to be reade, all other bookes ether being false, or invtill, what soeuer estimation other men maketh of their long commentaries ould or new. If it had bene in England I wold haue taken him for a Brouniſt. Onlie could I iudge for the tyme that he approued no mans sentence that had

spoken

ſpoken before him.

To be short there was none at the table (excepr ſo manie Catholiques as we were) who agreed with one an other. So euerie one hauing ether openly or couertlie ſhewen his opinion, we perceaued an honeſt man (who had dyned with vs, and for ſome affaires had bene occupied in the towne verie late) ſitting at the head of the table: his honeſt and homelie behauiour made vs al caſt our eyes on him, & as it were, with our ſilence and looking deſyre the lyke of him. He being a man of iudgement and doctrine, and who was (as well apeared by his diſcourſe) very weal trauelled, after he had hard the whole matter and what we looked for, ſayed in this ſort.

Although the tyme and place (good fires) might iuſtlie excuſe my ſilence, yet that I ſeeme not to be by my fellowes, or refuſe your deſyre, I wil ſome what ſay to the matter I heare hath bin amongeſt you, rather to end the diſpute vnfite for the table, then to continue it. Which I will labour to do by the reciting of a notable hiſtorie of a moſt noble and wyſe Prince.

Being in France during the reigne of Charles the nynth, his brother Hēry the thrid being then our King (whereby we knew him to be a Polonian) I paſſing through the contry chanced on a noble man of my ould acquaintance at Rome, who (after he had imbraſſed me with great affection, and asked of my

other

other voyages since my parting) inuited me to his house which was hard by: which I did willingly, not only because I looued him tenderly, but also because I had hope by his meanes to knowe the singularities and customes of the country (which was my principal arnād there) by reason of his quallitie. Amongst many notable thinges. I heard of him, I marked this historie as he was rehearsing the singularitie of the court of parliament of Paris.

King Louis the 12 being earnestly requested and prayed by one of his fauorits and greateſt courtiers (who had an action of great importance before the court of parliament) to speak to the presidentes and chief counsellers in his fauoure, giuing his M. to vnderstand the great right he had, and what wrong he receaued of his aduerse partie. The King on this information partly for iustice cause (of which he was verie zelous, and therefor called the father of the people) partlie for the affection he boare to the gentilman, did promise him all assistance, not onlie in speaking to his iudges, but also with his owen presence, if that might bring anie thing to his right. And so he did in deed. For the day appointed for that processe, being come, the King with princes, and all other who vseth to assist his M. in sic actions, repaired to the Palace, where being setyued he shewed to the court of parliament that he was come there to see them do iustice according to their charge & oathe, and chief-

lie to that gentilman, whose action was in hand, and who had donne him good seruice sundry tymes wherein he yet continued. They on the other part promist (with all submission and reuerence) to do their duetie. Euerie man according to his rank hauing taken place, the aduocat, who was for the gentilman, begane first, and with great eloquence defended his parties cause, wherwith the King was verie glad, not only in him self (as he shewed by his countinance) but also vtered the same by wordes, saying to the first president (who was sitting vnder) *il hagaigné, He hath wonne.* The president answered modestly, it wil please your M. to heare the other partie, which the King granted the more willinglie for that he thought his fauorite had alredie wonne his cause. The other aduocat hauing entred in the matter with as great eloquence, but meakle better right, made the King first to doubt, nixt to incline somwhat, and last of al to approue so his title, that before he had pleaded out the cause, the King burste out with theis words, *Monsieur le president, ils ont tous deux gaigné. They haue wonne both.* Ye know by long experience what is to be done in sic thinges, I leaue it to you and your companie. And so before the last aduocat had ended, he past away. He had bene versed in the greatest affaires of Europe during his tyme both in peace & warres, and had experimented both good and euill fortune before, and in his reigne, yet not being trained

vp in

vp in matters of law and iudging of proceſſe, he was eaſelie moued to both the ſydes by eloquence filled vp with apparand reaſones. But as a moſt worthie and noble Prince he did acknowledge, his owen imperfection, leaning the iudgement of ſic affaires to the ordinaris officers of iuſtice, to iudge as they thoughe moſt reaſonable, as who by long and daylie experience had great knowledge of the law, and by examination of manie difficill actions which paſſed by their hande, were ſufficientlie armed againſt fraudful craft of the parties, who eaſelie may circumuēt a new iudge. My aduyſe is (good firs) that we imitat & follow this noble king (who being ſo potent a monarche durſt not raſhlie iudge on earthlie matters) in theſe controuerſies of religion referring the iudgement to the kirk, who hath bin theis manie hondreth yeares in poſſeſſion of that office by Gods owen commiſſion, and who with ſick equitie hath decided ſo manie intricate and difficil queſtions, wher doubtles, if we had bene conſtituted iudges we wold haue pronounced the ſentence for both the parties, ſeing that many of vs haue done wel worſe hauing condēned the kirk the ſpouſe of IESVS CHRIST vnhearing hir, following the firſt that hath accuſed hir & praiſed him ſelf.

This hiſtorie was pronounced with ſuch grace and authority that it appeaſed our diſpute, and pleaſed verie well the whole companie, and (if I be not deceaued) is not vnpre-

pre to end our preſent diſcours, which is of the ſame ſubiect. Wherefor without anie farther, I wil pray you and al good readers (if perchance any man wil beſtow the tyme to read this rude, diſcourſe of myne) to excuſe my language conſidering my long abſence out of my native contry: and that the verity doth beſt appeare, when it is leaſt painted, as the ſcriptures them ſelues do, vſing no eloquence, for *ſimplex eſt veritatis oratio*. Sure I am if this ſubiect had fallen in an eloquent mans hand, that it might haue ben traicted more quicklie and more plainly and with greatter contentement to the reader. I haue done what I could, & not what I wold, except that in parte I haue done what I wold, ſeing I haue written to the ſimple and vnlearned as I could and according to my poſſibilitie, I know not if according to their capacitie, How ſoeuer it be I wil pray the good reader to take my paines in good part. Perchance ſome other ſory to ſee a good cauſe ſo vnskillfully handled by me, wil take occaſion to do it, as it ſhould be done. Which wilbe very eaſy to many learned men, of which ther be good nõbre (thanks be to God) in our Iland, who may take from me the victory of eloquẽce, but not the honour of good wil, Wherin euery man may triomph without preiudice of his compagnion. Wherefor I pray the learned and Godlie Catholik endeauour him ſelf to traict this ſubiect as it meriteth in the name of God, who bleſſe vs all.

AMEN.